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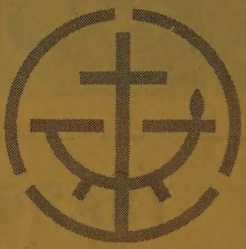

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CHRIST'S IDEA OF THE SUPERNATURAL

BY

JOHN H. DENISON

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge
1895

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The Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass., U. S. A.
Electrotyped and Printed by H. O. Houghton & Co.

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CHRIST'S IDEA OF THE SUPERNATURAL.

CHAPTER I.

RELATION OF GOD TO NATURE.

I. *Heaven and Earth a Natural Unity.*

When a man approaches Christianity from the standpoint of modern thought, he encounters an apparent unreasonableness. Christianity insists on men believing its revelation, as the condition of eternal life, but when it is appealed to to prove its revelation, so that a man can believe it, it presents a series of evidences more or less satisfactory, it is true, but not amounting to any absolute demonstration, and, to many honest minds, quite inconclusive. It is thus thrown into the absurd attitude of holding men responsible, under pain of eternal condemnation, when no conclusive evidence is furnished to the mind.

Now, at this point much depends on the man; if he be fair-minded he will, after viewing the situation, say, There must be some mistake here; however much or little one may accept of the details in the New Testament it is clear that there was a person named Jesus,—Cæsar's existence is not more certain. It is clear, too, that he must have been a singularly original, fair-minded and powerful character. This is shown by his impact on humanity; by the powerful and practical current that he made in religious thought and life. Now, no thoughtful or original character would have been likely to found his own religious claims upon so absurd a basis; for we must remember that the claims of Christianity represent Christ's own intellectual and moral position. We must remember, too, that the Jewish lawyers of Christ's day were shrewd reasoners. If his intellectual position was so very weak they might have been saved the trouble of crucifying him, for he would have fallen an easy prey to their logic. The inference therefore is fair that the same thing has occurred with regard to Jesus which has

so often occurred in regard to religious teachers: some great central truth of his system, to which his life and person gave peculiar emphasis, in the minds of his original hearers, has become obscured, or fallen into the background, and so, for lack of its proportioning effect, all related truths have been thrown into confusion or distortion. As a matter of fact, this is just what has occurred. There was a central truth of Christ's teaching which his life, his personality, his every action, and the very atmosphere that he carried with him, forced continually upon men with predominant emphasis. This was the truth which theology has somewhat vaguely striven to preserve to the world in the doctrine of the Incarnation. It was the unity between the natural and spiritual worlds.

The common idea of the spiritual world is indicated by the word "supernatural," which means, to the popular mind, something above and therefore beyond nature's realm, something wholly out of the category of natural forces, so that the tie between it and us is an arbitrary one. If there be a God, then from this standpoint nature

belongs to Him, not because of any affinity, but because He made it, as a watchmaker makes a watch. Taking this view, it is clear what a divine revelation would have to be. It must necessarily be non-natural, and as the contents of the revelation would relate to facts of which we have no experience, and for which we have no structural adaptation, the whole testimony of nature would be against it. Before men could reasonably believe it, it would have to be proved by a suspension of a natural law. This suspension would show that nature was in the hands of a being foreign to itself. The miracle would be valuable in proportion as the law was interfered with. Then, of course, the man would accept the message as extra-natural; he would believe it, though it told him that he must enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born. He would say, That is not natural, but I have evidence that there is a God outside of nature, and that He has decided, for reasons outside of nature, to employ me to do things that are outside of nature. Such a revelation would require either that its outward miracle should be

repeated from age to age, or that there should be an unbroken chain of historic testimony, consisting of persons who were themselves obeying this revelation, and doing things entirely above nature, or else there would have to be an inward miracle constantly repeated, by which God communicated, by means of some subjective prodigy, the certainty of this past revelation.

Again, we see that, with such a view of the supernatural, it could have no relationship to human life; being out of the category of natural forces, what could it have to do with a bundle of natural forces like man? Alien to natural vitalities, what could it have to do with our vitality? Outside of nature, what bearing could it have on our moral nature? — for surely there are only two positions. If the supernatural is, strictly speaking, above nature, then it is outside of nature and everything belonging to it. If, on the other hand, it is related to any part of nature, then it belongs to the whole, for nature is a unity. Assuming that it is above and outside of nature, then of course it is wholly beyond natural experience, nay, natural experience is all against

it, its very existence is unlikely and calls for a proof that can outweigh nature's testimony.

It is clear what religion becomes, starting from such premises; it is a thing wholly non-natural, an experience to which nature is opposed. Thus, to the religious man, nature becomes a violent antagonist. God's will is, as the Calvinist said, wholly arbitrary; all nature cries out against it; the bodily constitution is opposed to it; in fact, from this standpoint the flesh is an unmitigated evil, and asceticism is the triumph of faith. So again, prayer, praise, and religious duties in general, are entirely arbitrary proceedings. The world is no better, mankind not one whit advanced for them, because they have no relationship to anything upon earth; it is true they may be done to please God, but the pleasure He takes in them is of a purely self-gratifying sort.

If we take the opposite view, propounded by some philosophers, that which we have called the supernatural becomes simply the most inclusive natural, or the unknowable force, of which all nature is the product.

It is plain to see with that view what a supernatural revelation becomes. It is simply the imperative mood of nature voiced in any man, a command that says one thing upon the pages of St. Paul, a violently opposite thing on the pages of Byron. It speaks alike in the noble sacrifice of the Christ, and in the unrestrained life of Shelley. With it a religion becomes impossible; it is a compass without any north star to point to.

It should be carefully noted that neither of these views is due to any school of thought, either ancient or modern. They have prevailed at all times, more or less; they are not due so much to logic as to a state of the feelings. The first view, particularly that of extreme supernaturalism, has marked a mechanical and thoughtless tendency. It is a view that frequently characterizes religious people who are maintaining the forms of religion, but whose feelings are as a matter of fact absorbed with earth. It is the logical result of the atrophy of spiritual intuition in a man who still clings to spiritual forms. In the case of religious leaders the misery

of it is, that in their hands this weird and arbitrary supernaturalism becomes a dreadful engine for the mangling and crushing of the religious nature itself. True, this kind of authority has been wielded by priests in the apparent interests of morality, nay, it has proved the bulwark of a certain dogmatic faith, of a governmental justice, a conventional righteousness. It is doubtless better than anarchy. It may be, at times, the only bulwark possible to certain forms of civilization, which have a transient value, but if we are to take the word of Christ, it is to the heart of God well-nigh intolerable, for it is a cruelty to the human soul. It rarely fails to kill the tender fibres of living faith, or to extinguish the love of God. This was what Jesus saw going on about him, under the priests and rabbis, and it awoke his fiery protest. To his eye they were destroying men, for to him outward institutions were relatively a small thing. Religion and morality were the living fibres of living souls; therefore against this heartless and tyrannous supernaturalism Jesus never ceased to oppose the whole testimony of his spir-

itual consciousness. It was the vital issue between him and the hierarchy. In a coming Messiah they looked for a certain kind of supernaturalism. Jesus presented a diametrically opposite kind. They looked for a prodigy to support their claims; in its stead Jesus presented the life of the Father, embodied in the humble guise of a Galilean peasant. To this he felt himself imperatively called by the divine love. God pressed upon him. God would be humanized.

But this presentation of supernaturalism was not what the hierarchy wanted; to have waited long years for a reinforcement of prodigies, with which to restore the old theocracy, and then to have to put up with Jesus! it broke their hopes, was fatal to their pride, and, as Jesus said, they both saw and hated both him and his Father. It was therefore against implacable antagonism and hostile criticism that Jesus advanced his view of the supernatural. The very sharpness of the conflict threw this idea ever into the foreground. It was hardly necessary that he should announce or define his view; it announced

and defined itself. It is next to impossible for us at this distance, reading the Gospels in a coolly intellectual way, to realize the tremendous proportion that the supernaturalism of Jesus assumed to the men of his day. It put him at once in the forefront; expectation hung on him; the whole national hope stood breathless before him. As he went in and out of synagogues, the representatives of Judaism watched him with closest scrutiny. Nor did they watch in vain; they had not to wait for words; his supernaturalism sat upon his brow; it held out its quiet but unyielding claim in his very mien; it came heavily weighted with every act. Whatever he said or did issued from it, — conveyed it. It was self-defining, aggressive, irresistible; had he been content with words, had he merely lectured about it, the offense would have been small; had he only stood in the synagogue and said with calm assurance, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee," he might have been censured and forgiven, but when he said, "Take up thy bed and walk," and even disease obeyed him, then according to the

account their fury rose. From that point on, the struggle was desperate, and as when they declared, "He blasphemeth," because he said he was the Son of God, or when he persisted in healing on the Sabbath day, or again when he refused to withdraw his statement that he was the real bread from heaven, the bitterness of the conflict ever centred about the same point. It was his presentation of the supernatural; so desperate were they that they even declared it to be diabolic. Both sides knew that it was a struggle for life. To Jesus it was clear from the first how it must end; they would be driven to crucify him, but from the cross itself he expected to give the crowning truth of his supernaturalism. Toward that he advanced with a step that none could put aside.

Thus must it ever be with the original conveyance of spiritual or moral truth. These truths cannot be originally explained or presented by lecture-room methods. Nor can they at the outset be proved, for they cannot be philosophically stated; they require a free hand and a cre-

ative power; they are, as Jesus declared them to be, inseparable from the flesh and blood of the teacher; at the outset, analysis is a deathblow to them. It is so, too, with æsthetic truth. The soul of the artist must be in touch with life and under her immediate inspirations. His teaching must consist in living forms, evoked by living forms. It must start to life at life's touch. First Giotto paints, then follows the art critic; so, too, with the whole range of truth related to man's higher sensibility; original teaching here must always be life. The truth must first be created in the form of manhood, then comprehended, intellectualized, and applied. Garibaldi's deeds shine upon Italy and the Italians see that they have a *patria.* Cavour, the astute politician, applies the principle scientifically and the new Italy appears.

The original form of these truths is life, always life; the man of action, the creator, must come first. To attempt to anticipate his work is, as Jesus expressed it, to be a thief and a robber; but after him, the thinker is invaluable; it becomes his

business to analyze this living truth, and to teach its elements as well as their application. Jesus clearly understood his work as truth maker, therefore he did not theorize or philosophize or take subjects into isolation from life. He taught in the crowd, under the pressure of humanity, face to face with the devil and his angels, but above all he lived; his life was a creation, a tragedy, and an interpretation; it shone upon the teeming world about him and irradiated it, till its archaic forms were transfused with light and turned into a gospel. In no other way could he have been the great original teacher, as he said to Pilate, — the king of the truth. But it is for us who would possess this truth to analyze its intellectual contents and so possess ourselves of it.

As has been said, the issue of all this life-teaching was a certain unmistakable, aggressive view concerning supernaturalism. This view we find distinctly asserted in his teaching concerning the Kingdom of God, which occupies a large part of the first three Gospels. Beyond question the coming of the Kingdom of God signified

to the Jewish mind the entrance of supernatural power into the natural world, and their notion of such an entrance was that it would be essentially unlike the entrance of a natural force. This was the ground, as has been said, of their opposition to the Messiahship of Jesus. He had entered the world in too humble and naturalistic a way. Indeed, Jesus found the Jewish mind so hostile that he partially disguised the truth in parables, thus giving to it a germinative rather than an immediate disclosure. This broke the violence of the collision, and gave him an opportunity for his preparatory work. He, however, interpreted these parables to his disciples, and what was their theme? The entrance of this expected supernaturalism which he illustrated in the parable of the sower. To begin with, there is the supernatural force of the kingdom, and what is it? his own word, the word of a man, a Nazarene, born of a woman, as natural as it was supernatural. But what was its method of entrance and operation upon the world? Like that of a seed in the field. Now, if one were to select from the whole uni-

verse, it would be impossible to pick out a more typical instance of the way in which a natural force enters on its work. Whether we view the transmissiveness of the seed itself, or the affiliation of the earth for it, or the strange affinity of the invisible life force for matter, we have a perfect illustration of what we call Nature's method, by which all her forces do their work. They all operate along the line of undeveloped unities. They are all, as we express it, correlated with one another. There is between them a kind of reciprocity. That reciprocity is not now wholly realized, but it *can* be. It is potential. The method by which it is to be realized is that of the living organism. By living organisms reciprocity is established between the facts and forces of the natural world. The higher the organism the wider is the circle of these reciprocities, for organic life is the great coördinator.

When I say it is the coördinator, I mean that it coördinates or harnesses together things that are adapted to each other. Here, for example, is the dark mould beneath the surface of a wheat field; there

is the sunlit air above; there are chemical elements, some of them in the soil, some in the atmosphere; all these are correlated with each other; there is a potential reciprocity between them, but it is not established. Now, there drops into the soil a kernel of corn; by its vitality it establishes the reciprocity between the clods of earth that lie around it, and also between the chemical elements they contain. Then, as it rises and pushes its head above ground, it establishes a yet farther reciprocity; it coördinates earth and sky, and, taking the chemical elements of both, elaborates them into food, thus coördinating them with the human stomach, with human life, and with its far-reaching activities.

Now nothing could at first sight appear more absolutely alien than a force like human will and such an inert thing as a lump of earth; yet we see that they have a potential reciprocity; they are correlated, and may actually be coördinated by a kernel of corn. A loaf of bread is a product of such coördination between vegetable life and lumps of earth, and for

want of a loaf of bread, the energy of the human will has been known to collapse. Now the question is, how far this correlation of forces extends. One thing is certain, it extends beyond what men used to call the sky. It takes in all the stars of light, and what men once called God's throne. Does it *actually* take in God's throne? Undoubtedly, if God's throne be a glorious star; but what if it be a force — does it take in that force? or does it climb all the way up the ladder of forces till it reaches God, and there stop, shutting us out of the same category with God? Those that have studied nature profoundly, reverently, scientifically, have had a growing conviction that her unity did somehow take in God; that God is with us in this universe. "Natural Law in the Spiritual World" is the title of a book that has aroused unusual interest. It appeals to the growing sense of unity, to the feeling that the supernatural must be somehow natural. The aim of the book is to show that natural law does take in the spiritual world. To many minds this view seems to involve a fundamental error.

Spirit, they say, is free; it is not necessitated, it does not come under the sway of natural force. It is a free will. Undoubtedly this is true. Man's spirit is free; no force of nature necessitates its choice. You may refuse a man bread if he confesses Christ; but that does not necessitate his denying Christ. On the other hand, however, the man's spirit is a force, an organic force; the taking away of the bread interferes with its power as an organic force; the spirit itself is free, but it is hindered in its range of activity, and it suffers. Thus, while in one sense it is free from the sweep of organic law, it is nevertheless affected by it. It has, as has been said, a potential reciprocity. It may choose to let that reciprocity go. It may choose to die, that is, to pass out of the range of reciprocity, out of the field of organic coördination, but the pang of death attests the profound constitutionality of this reciprocity. The human spirit does not willingly cease to be coördinated with matter. Now, it is because the human spirit is not only a free will but an organic force that it belongs to nature, and if natural law

actually extends throughout the supernatural world, then we must conceive of God as being himself the Supreme Organic Force. Nor is this position necessarily inconsistent with God's Infinity or Absoluteness. It is conceivable that there is in him a potential correlation with the material world, a correlation which he is free to abandon; which is in fact of his own making, but which, while it lasts, brings him into the same category with us, and so necessitates his suffering with us. It is a fair hypothesis that there is thus not only a divine Will, but a divine Nature, a department of the divine Being, correlated with nature and immanent in it, as the vegetative life is immanent in the wheat stem. If God has such a nature thus reciprocal with ours, thus coördinated with earth by every living organism, then indeed there is a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, for in all our affliction he is afflicted, and in all our necessity he is necessitated; yet with all he is free; his sovereign decree lies at the foundation of it all. He is not only immanent but supra-manent. "He inhabiteth eter-

nity." With this limitation, there is certainly no difficulty about this conception of natural law, as taking in the spiritual world, though in all probability the better statement would be that spiritual law takes in the natural world.

II. *Morality founded on Relationship.*

But what has this question of the relation between nature and the supernatural to do with that practical righteousness which was the aim of Christ's life? It has everything to do with it, for Christ conceived of the moral law as based on an organic relationship which extended to the heart of God himself, and he held that all moral power is generated by a recognition of those relations on which morality itself is based.

This is instanced in his reply to a certain lawyer, a representative of the hostile hierarchy, who endeavors to draw this uneducated peasant into the meshes of learned casuistry. Which is the great commandment in the law, asks the subtle logician. There is a contradiction as to detail in the recollection of the different

disciples, some asserting that Jesus replied by repeating the two well-known summaries in Deuteronomy. Another account represents him as returning the question in a form that pinned the lawyer to his book, while it put him on his mettle to give the matter an intelligent construction. "What is written in the law? how readest thou?" said Jesus. When the man stated the law, in accordance with the most intelligent construction of the day, Jesus simply returned him his answer, adding somewhat dryly, "This do, and thou shalt live." This latter part of the reply pointed out the real difficulty which underlay all the attempts of these learned men to find the truth. It was the unnaturalness of their religion. Even when they had the intellectual clue to the law, they could not unravel it; it remained a riddle to them; they could indeed comprehend its formal statement, concerning the supremacy of love; but love itself they did not comprehend. They had not experienced it, nor was it disclosed to them as an organic force. They could not therefore discern its relation to life.

Claiming to be an authority upon the subject of the moral law, and to be adequate critics of Christ's moral position, they themselves knew not how to apply the law. It was not to them a practical or a livable thing. It did not adjust them to Nature, nor to her higher spiritual vitalities. There was therefore a keen though mournful sarcasm in the reply of Jesus: "This do, and thou shalt live." But according to all accounts Jesus indorsed the position held by the ablest jurists of his nation; he planted himself like them upon the two great summaries of Deuteronomy. "'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind;' this," he said, "is the first and great commandment; and the second is like unto it: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." But when the lawyer retreats once more into the labyrinths of casuistry, and lawyer-like asks, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus, who always kept control of a conversation, does not allow himself to be drawn into this fruitless

discussion of terminology, but he gives an instance of a certain man who fell among thieves; and so faithful is this touch of nature that when Jesus concludes with the question, "Who was neighbor to him that fell among thieves?" the lawyer, taken by surprise, is constrained by the logic of his heart to say, "He that showed mercy on him." Whereat Jesus answers again dryly and pointedly, "Go thou and do likewise." This story of the good Samaritan is one of the master strokes of Jesus; it defines neighborliness, artist-like, not by terminology but by portrayal.

The portrayal is so lifelike, one is obliged to say, Yes, that is it; while at the same time all its facts stand out in such clear proportion that there is no mistaking its philosophy.

To the Jew or any one else in Christ's time, "neighbor" was a rather undefined as well as undefinable term; it could, in fact, only be defined by throwing clear light on the unity which it represented. To comprehend the unity is to comprehend the word "neighbor." Even to their minds it

had, however, some boundaries that appeared to be established; it did not include a barbarian nor a slave, nor to a Jewish mind did it include a Samaritan. These distinctions were certainly not philosophic, they were not founded upon nature or reality. In fact, the word "neighbor" represented an arbitrary and conventional unity. Of course the love founded on it had a capricious and formal quality; like anything not rooted in nature's unity, it had little of nature's force; it was a conventional, sickly kind of product: but here was a Samaritan who was a neighbor. His neighborliness was of a healthy kind, too. There was in it something of Nature's grand vitality. It had the force and spontaneity of her great currents; it did not stop for trifles; it burst through the wall of Judaism: and here were a priest and a Levite, ministers of the Jewish religion, keepers of its moral law, who were not neighbors to their own religious confrère. Why were they not? The answer is clear; the neighbor is he that showed mercy on him. But what is mercy? A natural potency of the human heart; a feel-

ing that requires voluntary cultivation, no doubt, and therefore we call it moral; but who will say that it is not native to the heart of the good Samaritan? Clearly, this Samaritan has a natural faculty within him, by which he can feel the heart of the Jew; can feel his misery, his want; can feel what would do him good; can feel that oil and wine would be comforting to him; can show this feeling by practical embodiments of it: and the Jew in his turn can, through these embodiments, feel the merciful heart of the Samaritan.

This is an extraordinary thing, you notice, a great discovery, greater than that of gas or electricity or America, for here was supposed to be the boundary of neighborhood, and now the boundary is crossed. Once crossed, it will be crossed again and again. Indeed, the followers of Jesus have been crossing it ever since, and have been proving not only that the Jew and the Samaritan are neighbors, but likewise the Jew and the Greek, the Anglo-Saxon and the Chinaman; in short, that all men are neighbors or near-dwellers, that there is between them all a potential reciprocity.

And the law is that this should be established like all other natural correlations, just as the good Samaritan established it, by organic coördination. This potency of mercy shall not lie dormant and stifled in the heart; the life organs shall take it up; the brain shall throb with its problem, and the heart pulsate with its emotion, and the eye kindle with its light, and the hand and foot make haste to do its bidding. Then, when reciprocal feeling becomes an organic embodiment, nature's unity is completed, — Jew and Samaritan become neighbors or near-dwellers indeed. Now, as Jesus said, upon this organic law of love hang all the law and the prophets, for organic love is like the full corn in the ear; it is reproductive; the whole field of nature belongs to it, and it is an all-embracing force. It coördinates all reciprocal facts and forces; it establishes all correlations; it awakens all natural potencies; it begets everywhere its own image and likeness; it seizes the ground with its roots; it extirpates every evil and hateful growth. Thus one true neighbor, carrying neighborhood in look and voice and

hand, — one neighbor who cannot be overcome by evil treatment, or frozen by indifference, — begets at last a community of neighbors, for, like a true kernel of corn, he breaks up the clods and establishes the reciprocities. This is the natural law of love. A natural law is the method in which a natural force acts. The natural force of love is feeling. When a man is touched by the living organism of love, when he comes in contact with a true neighbor, the feeling of love is awakened.

This is a perfectly natural process; it is as natural as is the feeling of pain at a pin's prick, or gratification at the taste of food. But at that point natural law stops; it stops because the natural force of love can go no further. It has come to the boundary line of personal freedom. Within that line nothing can be necessitated. The natural force here takes on a new function; it no longer necessitates, it appeals. Here, in this realm of liberty, sits enthroned the will. Love may constrain the feelings, may shake the nerve centres with emotion, may draw unwilling tears, but it cannot force the will. The will can resist

love, can harden the feelings to it, can string the nerves against it, can refuse to let it get possession of the organism. A man can by the effort of his will preoccupy his organic sensibilities with animal passion and selfish absorption, so as at last to make them impervious to the force of love. Like the priest and the Levite, he can pass by on the other side. This is what is called in the Scripture "the hardening of the heart." It seems probable that such a hardened and insensitive organism may also be passed along by heredity. Such is the scope of the free will.

It may, on the other hand, respond to the appeal of love and cultivate its organic forms, until the entire organism becomes filled with a joyous sensitiveness and with all the vitality of love. Love is therefore, in all its forms, the result of intelligent cultivation by the will. This is its glory and its value, that it is the product of a free choice. It is in this respect unlike passion and appetite. Passion and appetite are natural forces proceeding from the animal sensibilities. They at first only appeal to the will, but if over cultivated

they have a tendency to necessitate and enslave it. This, however, is not the case with moral love. When it approaches the will it stops with its mute appeal. It stands with its touch of life, offering to give life, but it does not offer to enchain. It addresses itself, however, to the intellectual powers, to the reason and the conscience, for these are regulative; they assist freedom. To them, therefore, love appeals. It takes the form of moral law. It holds up rewards and penalties. It speaks with supreme authority, as being recognizably the noblest element of our being. It commands: Thou shalt love.

But who is the original neighbor — the eternal *nigh-dweller*, whose sympathy with mankind is not merely a potency, but a tide of feeling, ever fresh and vast and buoyant, ever putting itself forth in newer organism, in deeper tone of love, in gentler ways, in larger gifts, — that nigh-dweller whose sympathy cannot be overcome by hate or quenched by neglect, whose love begets all other loves, whose living embodiments awaken all potencies, establish all reciprocities and build up all

unities? Beyond all doubt there is such a neighbor, one who is with us in nature, who belongs to the same category. The infinite tide of his feeling is the natural force of love. It is the force on which all others hang, with which all are coördinated. This declaration, the glad tidings of this Eternal Nigh-dweller, is the heart of Christ's gospel. But, for Him, the word "neighbor" is not enough; he is the begetter of all neighborly feeling, the one from whom all near-dwelling proceeds: therefore Jesus calls Him the Father.

CHAPTER II.

OUR NEAREST RELATIVE.

I. *The Supreme Law of Righteousness.*

In the previous chapter we saw that the great central truth of Christ's teaching was the unity between the natural and supernatural. Doubtless some people will object to this statement; they will say that the great central truth of Christ's teaching was the personal disclosure of God. It is quite true that it was a personal disclosure rather than an abstract idea. The personal disclosure is the larger element—it is the one on which religion feeds. But Christ's personal disclosure of God was the disclosure of his fatherhood; and that idea of divine fatherhood, viewed in the light of modern science, stands for organic unity between God and man, and, as we have seen, to the mind of Jesus it stood for the same thing. But if there be an organic unity between God and man,

surely it is impossible to stop at that point, for man is a unity with the nature about him. Unity between God and man necessarily includes a unity between God's world and man's world. Furthermore, it so happens at this time that the particular difficulty with which Christianity has to deal in men's minds grows out of the way in which God's relation to Nature is presented, or, in other words, out of a false supernaturalism. It is therefore of the utmost consequence that we should grasp with a clear and strong hold the abstract idea of the supernatural contained in Christ's disclosure of God, particularly its moral significance.

It would be impossible out of the whole vocabulary of language to select a term more expressive of nature's correlations than the word "Father." Yet theology has largely emptied it of its meaning. The father is bound to the son by the tie of organic feeling; he cannot help suffering with and for his child, unless by the hardening power of the will he steels himself against nature. In David's lament over Absalom, the Jews had a correct and accepted

portrayal of fatherhood drawn to the life. The true father's heart is there seen, necessitated by nature's law, to suffer under the sins of the child. We may criticise his indulgence of the feeling, but its existence was normal. It was the law of organic unity that wrung from David's heart that cry, "Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son." Let a man read that story and weigh well the meaning which the word "Father" had in the teaching of the Old Testament. And when Christ used the word he used it for all it was worth; it carried this organic unity to the very heart of God. It branded as a lie that conception of God which puts Him beyond the realm of natural emotion.

Just precisely as an earthly child's moral relationship to his father has its tap-root deep in the natural relationship, so is it between man and God. In this potential unity of God with man lies the foundation of moral law. In the heart of the Infinite Father and Near-dweller is the fount of goodness and the ground of authority, because He can but feel for us, can but be pierced with our sins and suffer under

our pain. Yea, because no neglect extinguishes his love, and no offense overcomes it, because the tokens of his grace are new every morning and fresh every evening, because in his love lies all our higher vitality, because it can coördinate us with all that is good and deliver us from all that is evil, because, in short, all neighborhood hangs upon it; therefore the first and greatest demand of our moral nature is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, with all thy strength." Thou shalt respond with every reciprocity of thy being to the love of God, for in this response to God's love lies the organic vitality of all other love. To deny it is to deny one's own highest nature. Upon these two commandments hung all the law and the prophets. All merely conventional righteousness was to Jesus a corpse. It did not have the vitality of the divine love. It was not a real doer in the world, but a hypocrite, playing a theatrical part upon the stage; so when Jesus strove against sin, he unmasked this hypocrisy, showed what a whited sepulchre it was,

and held up over against it the true righteousness, based on these great organic unities. So, too, when Jesus taught morality, he did it by teaching unity; he held up the words of unity and extended them.

Thus he rescued morality, by taking its questions out of the field of abstract thought into the realm of natural feeling. Instead of arguing with men, he reached out after their hearts with allegories, and revived their human sympathies by touches of nature that led them to feel their kinship with one another and with God. Thus, also, he extended the term "neighbor," till it took in all sorts and conditions of men. Coördinating men with God, as children of one Father, he coördinated them with one another as brethren, and thus carried them up into a higher unity, while he deepened love by opening up its scope and source and natural law. Seeking to uplift and purify man's motive of action, he presents God as a watchful parent whose sympathetic eye is never off his child, who shares that child's darkest obscurity, his utmost desolation, and the innermost life of his soul. He urges men

to winnow their conduct from all superficial conventional motives, to take heed that their good acts are indeed embodiments of this divine reciprocity, — that they are done for this Father who seeth in secret, — and to seek the pure reward of his fatherly love.

In the same way he rescues prayer from the dreary fog into which theology had carried it. He recognizes it as a duty. God will reward it as such, but it is a filial duty. It has its tap-root in a natural relation, that of sonship. It is the dutiful cultivation of a natural tie, and its reward is a father's reward, bestowed not upon a mere performance, but upon the organism of a filial spirit. It is this unfolding organism of unity which is outwardly blessed by the Father who seeth in secret. So, too, Jesus urges men to prayer by sketching in a vivid way God's sensibility. He lays down a broad principle. Every one that asketh receiveth, he says; that is a fact of the natural world. Why? Because of human unity; all men have some degree of sensibility, therefore they are moved by an appeal; if they are ungenerous, still this organic law reaches

them. Take even the worst possible case, an unjust judge, who fears not God, neither regards man; even he yields to an appeal made by a poor widow. She is weak, insignificant, but she worries him. He grants her request, because it is hard to resist this law of unity, or lest, as he expresses it, by her continual coming she wear me away. Or take the case of a man who has gone to bed, and whose friend asks him to rise and give him three loaves. He gets his request, not because he is a friend, but because of his importunity, which importunity is a persistent appeal to unity. Even a man in bed cannot escape this law. Then Jesus takes the case of a father. What one of you having a son, if he ask bread, will give him a stone? That would be impossible, he argues; even you, though you are evil, he adds unflatteringly, even you have too much sensibility, even you know too well the unity between you and your children; you are not so stupid as to hurt your own flesh and blood; and is not your heavenly Father amenable to this same organic law? Does not He, from whom all fatherhood

proceeds, whose heart is neither hardened nor blinded by evil, does not He feel and know enough to give good things to those that ask Him? He may indeed refuse that for which the child clamors; He may perceive it to be a stone, or a scorpion; but will He not give real good to those that ask Him?—for prayer is itself the establishment of a filial reciprocity, and those that pray are already beginning to be children.

II. *The Gospel of the Father.*

But words fail in telling how Jesus awakened both religion and morality in men, by picturing the sympathy of God. This is his gospel of the Father. It is filled with the endearing terms and illustrations of unity, yet the terms would be empty, comparatively, and would be fruitless, except for the life with which Jesus has surcharged them. It is a great thing doubtless to be taught that we are thus correlated with the mysterious source of our being, that God has an eternal feeling for us, and that we have a potency for feeling God. To know that when this

spark of sonship is wholly undeveloped or quenched by sin He would fain leave the glory of his heavenly estate to rescue this fallen child; to know that God's moral law itself and even its penalties have their root in his natural affection for us; to see the veil drawn part way back and to get a glimpse of God's natural heart in the parable of the prodigal son; to know that there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, — these ideas are indeed like life from the dead. Even though they were but a philosophy, one is compelled to admit that they alone solve the problem of righteousness. But as we look at Jesus we are startled and awe-struck by the perception that they are not a product of his ratiocination, but a reality of his consciousness. This divine feeling for man, this infinite sympathy, this hungering of God after man's heart, this tenderness that clings to man, despite sin and indifference, this recognition of possible sonship in the vilest; all these supernatural elements we see stirring tumultuously in the human breast of Jesus, contending with the natural instinct of self-preservation;

for Jesus is not the cold, one-sided, intellectual type of man; he is the complete, impassioned, royal type. His intelligence is vast and clear, but his feeling is vaster still and clearer. It is an exalted consciousness; by it he touches God, he knows God's heart, he kindles with sympathy for that heart, he can but give himself up to it. He loses himself thus; he comes to seek and to save that which is lost, to be the human organism and embodiment of this divine feeling for man. It makes him a man of sorrows; it turns his life into a tragedy; surely "he hath carried our griefs." One is ready to kneel down when he hears Jesus say, out of this pent-up inner consciousness, "The Father hath sent me." Agony and joy struggle together in that phrase. It voices the same truth that we hear wrung from his lips in his great extremity, — the truth that this supernaturalism was not the creation of his own brain, nor could he alone endure to embody it. He was in far mightier hands, — hands that could not be turned back from sacrifice however great: hands that were able to carry him through. For there comes a

moment when even Jesus recoils. "Father, he cries, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." But in an instant it is over. He has felt the everlasting arms. "Not as I will, but as thou wilt. Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." To the mind of Jesus it was not he himself who made the great sacrifice. It was the Father who so loved the world as to give his only begotten son.

That Jesus was genuine in his testimony to his own consciousness there can be no doubt. He had no motive for being otherwise. As to the facts of that consciousness, the New Testament is flooded with them; they are not confined to any one Gospel; they are present on every page. However mutilated, fragmentary, or interspersed with myths, however destitute of miracles the Gospels may turn out to be, one thing is certain: there was a man, no further off than Galilee, who felt God with his flesh and blood, all the way from his peasant's workshop to Calvary. Nor did his clear intellect for one moment fail to see the bearing of this. It was for no small thing that this divine feeling made

him the burden-bearer of his race. He was the supreme Organ of unity, the divine At-one-ment. The oneness which had before been potential, in him became organic. In him God and man were coördinated.

CHAPTER III.

THE STEM OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

We have seen with what moral earnestness Jesus took up this question of supernaturalism, how clear was his conviction that all moral issues had their solution in this organic kingdom of God, that moral force came as truly under the operation of natural law as the vegetative, that God's word was the source of it, and that the righteous man was a man coördinated with God. We have seen, too, that these facts are the great theme of the first three Gospels. But it was impossible for Jesus to stop here. As has been said, his own consciousness of the Fatherhood, and his comprehension of the Father's purpose, compelled him to recognize in himself the great organ of the Word for that coördination. No one could be less egotistic than Jesus. He was above all men realistic, profoundly sensitive to the wants and

sufferings of men, painfully alive to their moral necessities. Above all, in him did the stupendous consciousness of the Father dwarf the consciousness of self. Yet by the very stress of this consciousness did he know his isolation. There was no one to share his burden. The Gospels all represent him as beginning his ministry by preaching that the kingdom of Heaven was at hand. And this preaching of the kingdom very clearly implied his own sovereignty and responsibility. Nor did he hesitate, when disciples gathered about him, to take his place as the supreme spiritual organ of the Word.[1] He took the throne at the outset. From the first his attitude had a peculiar majesty. He stood alone, He consulted no one. Nothing surprised him. He was an enigma to all, but clear to himself. He shared his joys, but never his plans. His one word to all men was, Follow me.

Coördination with God through himself

[1] All things have been delivered to me of my Father, neither doth any know the Father save the Son and he to whom the Son willeth to reveal him. — Matt. xi. 27.

One is your Master, even the Christ. — Matt. xxiii. 10.

he declared to be essential to moral salvation. A noticeable instance of this is the case of the young ruler who came to him asking, What good thing shall I do to inherit eternal life? With a profound philosophy, which reminds one of the fourth Gospel, Jesus repudiates the notion of goodness having any independent existence apart from God, but as was his usual custom with the educated classes refers him to the law. The young man declares that he has kept all the commandments from his youth. It is a strange case, a pathetic case; here is a man who has kept the laws of life, and yet he is unconscious of the life, but is an anxious and troubled seeker after it. "What lack I yet?" he says. There is something very curious about this. The moral law, then, is not like other laws. It is neither natural nor vital. Jesus discloses the trouble in a word. "One thing thou lackest," he says. "Sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven," or, in other words, divine capacity; "and come, take up the cross, and follow me."[1]

[1] Mark x. 21.

One may pick a lily and put it in a vase; water it, yes, and put its native earth about it; give it air and sunlight, keep the bugs off from it, treat it according to law, keep the law for it; what will it all avail if one neglects the one great law by which the lily lives, the law of organic coördination? You have plucked it from its stem, its mediator. Plough your wheat field as much as you will, keep it harrowed and untrodden, what will it avail toward life till there drops into it the kernel of wheat, nature's mediator that is to coördinate it with life? "Follow me," says the organ of nature. "Cling to me, give yourself up to me. Become my instruments, charged with my life," says the tree trunk to the branches; "become my life organs, and God will give you life." So in effect did Jesus say to the young ruler: "Eternal life, — it is the true eternal humanity coming from the bosom of God. He has surcharged me with it, that I might give it to the world. Help me, share my struggle, become the organ of my large disbursements, and as you are organized by life, you will have life."

There is not to be found in all Christ's sayings a single place where he exalts himself as an arbitrary mediator or formal vicegerent. He does not uphold his own supremacy or the recognition of it as having any value *per se.* In fact, he takes pains to declare the contrary. He solemnly avows to his disciples that the mere recognition of his rank amounts to nothing; that the exaltation of him as Lord, and even the accomplishment of wonders in his name and for his glorification cannot avail them anything in the day of judgment. His headship and his mediatorship were organic, not formal. Faith in him had, indeed, a supreme moral value because it enabled a man to enter into reciprocity with the spiritual world, to become a partaker of its moral force, and to bring forth the fruits of its spiritual righteousness. It was superior to the common worldly conventional righteousness, just as anything that is natural is superior to what is unnatural, superficial, and conventional. It was the only righteousness that saved, precisely as it is only nature that saves, while going contrary to nature is destruc-

tive. To follow natural law is to walk in a pathway of salvation; to go against natural law is to cast one's self into a bottomless abyss of misery and self-destruction. But the fundamental law of all others is this law of organic coördination. According to Jesus, it extends likewise to the moral nature. In fact the insistence of Jesus upon his messiahship as he viewed the messiahship was simply his insistence on the universality of a certain natural law and of certain specific functions. Man's world had a natural reciprocity with God's world. That reciprocity was to be established by the development of certain organic functions in manhood. Those functions had been imperfectly developed before. In him they were fulfilled.

It may be objected that this is reading modern thought into the conception of Jesus. I answer, No. It is simply giving his thought its modern equivalent. It is a great mistake to suppose that a realistic conception of nature depends on our modern forms of thought. Human conceptions of truth are not so dependent; they may exist even without language. There

have been lately brought to light several cases of deaf mutes, who, without written or spoken language to assist them, prior to all education had formed conceptions on all the great phenomena of nature, and apprehended certain well-known principles, such as causation and moral obligation. Nature supplied them with thought-stuff in her own forms and symbols. The fact is, nature — yes, even subjective nature — has herself a language; she tells her own story, she herself furnishes to the human mind the original norms of thought. Given an original mind, the greatest teacher a man can have is an inspired and sympathetic consciousness, such as Wordsworth describes as characteristic of his childhood. An original genius will often thus penetrate immeasurably beyond the ideas of his age, reading nature like an open book. Because the mind of Jesus grew like any other mind under the environment of his age, because he often expressed his thought in Jewish modes, because he even passed through Jewish phases of development, we are not to infer that his mature conceptions were thus

limited to the horizon of his time. To infer this is to ignore altogether the power possessed by a vast and sympathetic consciousness to choose its own environment, penetrating far and wide into the infinities.

Why should not such a vast and original nature have read nature at first hand, and spelled out her unities in the original terms of the Creator and Father? Unquestionably this is what the author of the fourth Gospel understood him to do, for he represents him as defining his headship and mediatorship by an illustration taken from nature. "I am the vine," he says, "and ye are the branches. Abide in me and I in you. Without me you can do nothing. He that abideth in me, the same bringeth forth much fruit. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered." We have thus put in nature's own parable and in the creator's original language the very principle that we have been discussing. And it is put here in a form so specific as to define the whole situation. The branches and the vine are what we call organs.

An organ is an instrument by which life is coördinated with the material universe. The branches are organs. They establish reciprocities between that mysterious invisible thing called life and the material forces of the world. But they can do nothing without a central organ, the vine, which has a grand specific function of its own for all the branches, mediating between them and the earth. The vine does not get between the branches and the earth. It does not interfere in any formal way between the branches and the earth. It does not obstruct the reciprocity; it makes it more complete. It is in fact a branch extension. To abide in the vine is to be coördinated with it in so vital a way that the two are a natural unity. One vital force pervades them both. For the branch not to abide in the vine is to obstruct coördination with the vine. Thus the branch becomes an isolated fact in nature. It is cut off from her great vital currents, dropped out of her circle of unity. It is then in a position opposed to natural law. It can no longer be an organ of vitality, for it does not fulfill

the law of vitality. It is withered, and this withering process takes place despite the fact that the vine has already done its work for the branch, has already made it to be a branch, has imparted to it specific functions, has already put it in direct coordination with heaven's light and life and sunshine. Still deep in the structure of things there remains a necessity for coördination with the vine. Certain organic necessities are supplied by the vine, without which the branches cannot have direct reciprocities with the skies.

In short, there is no such thing as absolute individualism. Nature's life is a shared life, in which certain lesser organs constitute a unity with larger and mightier organs. Nor is there any such thing as an organ having an isolated life, or holding independent reciprocity with God. This fact is sufficiently clear in the natural world. It was just as clear in Christ's day as in our day, for a man that had eyes to see it. His not possessing the word "organ," or the other word, "coördination," could not keep a stupendous and original mind from seeing the fact or the law, nor

could it keep him from seeing that it extended to the moral world, — that the moral world called for such an organ of unification, that his consciousness of God constituted him that organ, that it meant for him an awful burden and an awful joy. He saw the bearings of the moral law, he saw the dread necessity of the moral world, he saw no eye to pity and no arm to save. Therefore his own eye pitied and he saw that his own arm was appointed to bring salvation. With the imperiousness of a divine love, he called on men to share eternal life, to follow him and be put in touch with God, even as they put other men in touch with God; as they shared the sonship they themselves should become sons.

As is seen in this parable of the branch and the vine, Christ used the preposition "in" to express this idea of organic coördination with another organ, or with another life. And this same mode of expression passed into the current phraseology of the apostles, particularly of the apostle Paul, who, more than any other of the apostles, grasped hold of and

expanded this organic view of Jesus. To be in Christ was to be in organic coördination with Christ. To have Christ in one was to have Christ's moral vitality thoroughly coördinated with one's life and conduct, so that both were actually pervaded by the divine influence. So, likewise, to be "in the flesh" signified sometimes, but not always, a state of voluntary coördination with the hereditary passions of the race, so that one became a natural type or organ of the race's animalism.

Salvation, or righteousness, from this standpoint consisted in being delivered from this lower organic unity, and being brought into the higher unity of God. This occurs in the last prayer of Jesus on the eve of crucifixion. Here the whole tide of his life purpose wells forth. He prays for unity, first of all for the unity of his disciples. Keep them, he says, that they may be one, even as we are. While I was with them, he says, I kept them. He likewise states the instrument through which he kept them, namely, "thy word." This medium of unity is also the medium

of sanctification. In fact, the sanctification itself is, as we see at the end of the prayer, simply the perfected unity. The holiness is simply the wholeness of a man, through his establishment in that organic unity to which he belongs. Till he enters that unity he is not a whole man. He is not whole without Christ, any more than a branch is whole without the vine. Jesus goes on to pray for those who, as he expresses it, "shall believe on me through their word," that they all may enter this unity, "as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." The oneness for which he prays here is not oneness of substance with God. It is the same kind of oneness with God that he had himself, as a human organ, — the unity of reciprocal vitalities. The branch is not the same thing as the vine, it does not occupy the same position, it does not have the same function, it never will. The vine is not of the same substance with the earth. There is an essential difference between it and the earth, and always will be. Yet the branch may be one with the vine, as the vine is one with the earth.

There is a oneness of life and reciprocity, not a oneness of identity; and it is this oneness of perfect moral reciprocity with the Father and himself to which Christ calls men. Christ as a human being was a perfect organ of God's moral vitality for mankind. Men are capable of coördination with him. The question whether Jesus had another and a higher form of unity with God is an entirely different affair, nor do I propose to take it up in this place. An eternal unity of substance with the Father is an entirely different thing from the unity of organic coördination with him. The unity that Christ urges men to share with him is the latter. It is a natural as well as a practical thing, and if once secured constitutes the only solid standpoint from which the higher and subtler question can be discussed. Jesus himself declares that this organic unity of his disciples constitutes the real evidence for the truth of Christianity, and of his having been sent from the Father, whatever that latter expression may mean. In fact, the real difficulty that men have found with Christ's mediatorial

headship lies in the formal and non-natural way in which it has been presented, and also in the tendency to view the individual man as constituting a whole by himself, whereas there is no such thing in God's organic universe as individualistic wholeness or vitality. It is strange indeed that men should reject Christ's idea, which is the truly scientific one, in religion, and should cling to the individualistic notion in morals, when it has long ago been exploded everywhere else.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GOSPEL OF THE BODY.

It may be said that it is an easy thing to read a certain philosophy of nature into the teaching of one who, like Jesus, left no direct philosophic statements to trip up one's theory. There is, however, a test that ought to be conclusive; that test lies in the position which Christ gave in his system to the human body. I say, his system, because there was a system in his teaching, as there is in the movement of the stars or the growth of the forest. If you find the underlying principle, all his revelations are consistent with one another. Now the question is, did he give the human body the position in his teachings and life that must belong to it in such an organic scheme of the two worlds? Undoubtedly he held that he himself, in his personal entirety, was the stem through which God's word operated on the world.

Furthermore, he must have held that this operation was to continue not only through his earthly life, but through his death, resurrection, his coming to judgment, and final reign over men. These different extensions of his staminate function he frequently dwelt upon, and indeed upon oath, before the High Priest, declared not only that he was the Messiah, but that he should come in the clouds of heaven. But in all these conceptions, the body or physical nature of the Christ is put prominently forward by him, as the organism through whose progressive development the world was to be coördinated with the word of God. But this idea involved a similar notion for the human body in general. "The servant must be as his master;" the disciple must correspond to his Lord; what was true of the stem must be true of the branches. If his own body was an organ of spiritual coördination with all men, then surely all men's bodies must be capable of taking on such a unity. This put the body into the category of the supernatural, and made of it a divine organ.

Some of the world religions have had a glimmering of this truth, and have deified the body; they have even gone so far as to worship the reproductive powers, but in doing this they have destroyed the moral nature, sinking it deep in the mire of natural passion. Others, like the Essenes in Christ's time, have found refuge only by reacting from naturalism altogether. Nature has seemed to them an evil, the body a thing to be trampled under foot, or wasted away, in order to give place to the spirit. In short, the material world must be reduced to nonentity in order that the spiritual world might take its true place. We still have among us the apostles of this view in a class of people who think that the way to be spiritual is to deny and abjure the material. It is safe to say that no one but Jesus ever successfully solved the problem of the body. He solved it by treating the body exactly as it should be treated, if it be indeed the natural organ of the spiritual world. If that be the case, then the evil of it is not to be conquered by such a vain process as denying its real existence, or reducing its valua-

tion to zero point, still less by crushing it or wasting it away, but by putting it to its normal use, by determinedly wresting it from false and base coördinations, by making it the organ of God's spirit, and so bringing it into the unity of the spiritual world. And it was precisely this position that Jesus took. This was the way in which he dealt with his own body. He acted as though it had an eternal reciprocity with the spiritual world. He used it not as the mean instrument of pleasure or of earthly gain, but as the instrument by which to radiate forth the glory of God. He developed it to the uttermost in this direction; he made it a medium for the mightiest spiritual and salvatory forces. Thus the body of Jesus was to him a means of the highest joy. He was not ascetic; he did not abjure the dinner table or the wedding feast; he practised no austerities or penance. He was tortured with no perplexities as to the amount of his bodily indulgence. It was a small question to him whether he ate at the table of a wealthy man or sat unfed by the well of Samaria. His physical organism

was strung to higher ends; it vibrated to grander joys. He proved beyond cavil that the body is not so mean a thing as we have thought it. It had meat to eat that we knew not of till Jesus found it and shared it with us.

It is true that Jesus did at times have mighty conflicts with the body, but they were practical struggles. They did not aim at the absurd and hopeless end of crushing the organism that God had given. Therefore his struggles were followed by no reactions; they succeeded in their purpose, because their purpose was in a line with nature. Thus he fasted in the wilderness forty days, but it did not end in fasting. It did not issue in a physical organization crushed and bound with the fetters of austere living. It issued in a physical nature singularly large and free. It was the greatest characteristic of Jesus that he was *alive*. So large was Christ's way of living, so full was his pulse, so free was his step, that narrow critics called him a glutton and winebibber, a frequenter of low places, a keeper of bad company. His fasting in

the wilderness was aimed to subdue all abnormal relations, and to bring his body to its normal function. When he came out he was full of the Holy Ghost; the powers of the heavenly world were upon him, because his vitalities were perfectly developed, perfectly subordinated, and perfectly coördinated with the spiritual world. He was ready for his work, and his body enjoyed the work. It was the pivotal thing in the work, for the characteristic feature of Christ's work was the power he exerted through bodily contact; the glance of his eye, the tone of his voice, the touch of his hand, were magnetic. They vibrated with life, they started men to life, they awoke bodily response, they thrilled men's nerves, they bound their throbbing hearts to him, they healed, they sanctified; his flesh and blood seemed surcharged with spiritual force. His bodily presence carried health, it radiated love and light and purity. He sought contact, always contact, even with the lowest. It was for this that he sat down to eat with outcasts, for this he dined with the Pharisee that scorned him. Even the leper felt upon

his loathsome flesh that comforting touch. In fact, Christ's hope rested mainly on his bodily contact with humanity. Truth of the kind he taught was non-vital, except as it was embodied. This feeling of God for man was a truth that had no unifying force, except as it became organic. It was inseparable from flesh and blood. The animal man must realize it through animal sight and touch. It must be coördinated with the fleshly sensibilities. It must be felt at the nerve centres. Moreover, with his amazing insight into cause and effect, he saw how this was to be brought about. As he surveyed the malignant faces that ofttimes scowled on him, he knew that his soul was among lions. He foresaw the issue of this bodily contact with a wicked hierarchy, a fickle mob, and a politic Roman governor. He saw himself hanging like any common criminal on the Roman Cross, his body broken, his blood shed. He looked upward, but he saw no deliverance there; no old-time miracle could break the path of natural causation which he trod, he, the real unifier, and therefore Redeemer. He

must be delivered into the *hands* of sinful men, but through that very real and terrible contact with flesh and blood, he saw that the Father would effect a unity with mankind, and he rejoiced. He took the cup and gave thanks.

His mind dwelt on God's method in nature. He surveyed the unvarying plan by which God develops unities there. His imagination fastened on the corn of wheat, God's organ of physical mediation between vegetative life and the inert atoms of the soil. God gives life, he thought, only by contact with an organ of life, by contact even unto death. Except the corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, an isolated helpless thing in the midst of nature; but if by contact with the destroying earth it dies, then it brings forth much fruit. It becomes the unifying and vivifying centre of new vitalities. So it is in the moral world, he reasoned. Spiritual love can only be made to tell upon the universe through the sacrifice of the body, which is its organ. When men have slain my body, then they will know the love wherewith

God has loved them. Then will it awake in them organic love; then will they have a true humanity, an organism in which the Father's spirit can dwell, as the sunshine dwells in the grape. Then shall I drink with them the new wine in my Father's kingdom. His mind dwelt on this until he felt first calmness, and then exaltation. What had seemed a terrible evil ceased to be an evil at all. As the earth by organic contact devours the seed, and so gets the vitality out of it, thus must these men devour my flesh and blood, that they may find the vitality of God's spirit. For the sake of the future he asserted this truth, saying prophetically to the wolf-like mob about him, "Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, ye have no life in you."[1] Their unspiritualized and literal minds rebelled at this gospel of the body. That a man's flesh should be given them to eat, seemed monstrous; that it should be called bread from heaven, appeared profane. So little did they read nature's wondrous symbolism. He tried to make them understand that it was this

[1] John vi. 53.

coördination of his body with God's spirit that made it lifegiving. "It is the spirit that does the quickening," he said. "Do you not see, the words that I speak to you are not mere sound; they are the vehicle of a subtle element, they are spirit, and they are life."

It was in vain. Many of his disciples forsook him for that prophecy. From that day to this, an absurd construction has been put upon it by many religious thinkers. But the doctrine of Jesus was the doctrine of nature, the doctrine that we universally recognize in the cultivation of our fields, that lifeless material must be coördinated with life, by the sacrifice of a life organ. That is the law of biogenesis. It is the truth which we are more and more coming to discern, as the foundation of all higher unities, the principle on which the mother gives moral life to her child, by which the hero vitalizes his country, and the martyr his church; and to the last, Jesus adhered to his doctrine. He exalted the body. He taught men not to destroy it, not to needlessly exhaust its energies, but to make the most

of it, as the organ both of man's own spirit and of God's spirit, and the organ for spiritual unity for mankind. And from the very first, he called upon his disciples to take up their cross, viz., to share in that noble devotion of the body to the ends of spiritual life. That is the true and reasonable doctrine of the cross, and wherever it is held up, if it be rightly understood, it signifies the religion of organic nature, as against the forms of religion that are hopeless and non-natural.

Christ's gospel of the body produced two results. In the first place, it awakened in those about him a kind of faith such as is rare in our day, if it exists at all. It sprung from immediate bodily contact with himself. It might properly be called physical, for it came not from the intellect or moral nature alone. These elements indeed existed and were dominant in it, but with them was intertwined another strand. It was the physical sense of God's presence, felt by the body as it feels sunshine or electricity. Thus, as the apostles expressed it, the body became the temple of the Holy Ghost. The nervous

system itself felt the tone of God's love. It is true that with the death of the apostles who had bodily contact with Christ this physical faith did almost entirely pass away; but the portrait of it, the gospel of it, remains, and slowly but surely men are grasping its significance. Man is not, as dreamers have conceived him to be, a mere passing guest of the material universe; neither is he its prisoner. Matter is not fleeting; neither is it evil. It is the lasting correlative of mind. Even as animal magnetism and nervous energy are coördinated with the divine Love of the Christ, so are all spiritual and physical forces correlatable. Heaven and earth may pass away, but there will be a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. And the new earth, — it is genetically connected with the old earth. The new Jerusalem comes down out of heaven, but it also ascends from beneath. Man is its founder, Christ is its light, and on its walls are the names of the twelve apostles and of the Lamb, who by his bodily sacrifice brought men into this higher unity. Man is the great coördi-

nator. As he, through the help of Christ, the stem of righteousness, gains power rightly to coördinate the spiritual with the material world, greater miracles than those that Christ accomplished will be wrought.[1] Peter and John standing at the gate of the Temple, filled with physical faith, saying to the lame man, "Silver and gold have we none, but such as we have, give we thee;" saying, "Look on us," laying hold of him by the hand, are a true ideal of spiritual manhood, in which not only the immaterial mind, but the nervous centres themselves, should be surcharged with the uplifting energy of love; and the lame man, whose ankle-bones immediately received strength and who leaped and walked, praising God, is a fair picture of the potentiality that lies dormant in our stricken humanity, and of what it will do, when the organic love of God lays hold of it.

A second result is, that under Christ's gospel we have set before us the prospect of a glorified body. If faith is physical, if the body is a supernatural organ, then its glorification follows as a matter of

[1] John xiv. 12.

course. There is to a certain extent in Christianity a sympathy with the Greek idea, — the body is a glorious thing, is worthy of the highest culture. But here Christianity comes to the rescue of the Greek idea. The finest and highest culture is not that which make the body an end. It is that culture which makes it an organ of spiritual force and heavenly coördinations. Such a development will sometimes carry the body far away from the Greek ideal. It will leave it perhaps mangled and bleeding upon the cross, though radiant with a spiritual glory that no Hermes of Praxiteles ever contained. But if it be an undeveloped organ of the spiritual world, then it is an undeveloped organ of eternity; if it can transmit and radiate the divine sacrificial life of Christ, then it can share the spiritual evolution of that life; it can accompany the soul in its upward march. Like the plant emerging from the earth, it can reach a new centre of vitality. It can clothe itself with new forces, it can draw its vitality from above. We are then not to pass into an eternal ghosthood. Elysium is not the home of gibbering

shades. Man's last stage is that of physical completion. He is to rise again, to take his place in the organic universe as its dominant organism, as the image and glory of God, coördinating all things with God, stamping God's impress on all around him, finding the universe everywhere plastic to his energy,—a son of God full of creative fiats, everywhere reproducing God,—a joint heir with Jesus Christ. How greatly does this view enhance, not merely the value of man's spirit, but the worth of his organism! How vastly does it emphasize the respect that is to be given to the nervous system, particularly as being not merely an instrument for carrying forward the functions of this life, but a moral and spiritual instrument of the most subtle kind and of the vastest potentiality,—an instrument that is to be developed with the most tender care, both as to the moral and as to the physical laws of its development!

CHAPTER V.

THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM.

THE direct teaching of Jesus concerning the supernatural world constitutes the largest part of his discourses. He was incessantly occupied with it. With it he began and ended. It is the one theme of the first three Gospels, and he committed it to his disciples as their supreme moral interest. He called it the gospel or glad tidings of the kingdom. For the spiritual world itself he employed the popular word, "heaven." But it is noticeable that the word on his lips, like the words "neighbor," "father," "brother," took on a larger meaning. He used it at its full valuation. In fact, it was characteristic of Jesus that he thus expanded every important word which he employed. He not only poured into it a new vitality, but he made the word itself to grow like a cedar of Lebanon into its perfected type of stature and

of beauty. This word "heaven," for instance, did, to be sure, signify the abode of the gods, but it also had a more naturalistic meaning. It was not only the celestial region above the sky, but that whole upper realm of light and gladness, the home of the clouds, the winds, the birds; what we call the atmosphere, that sweet breath of the divine life that God breathes into man continually, and at whose inbreathing man becomes a living soul. This heaven of the atmosphere is indeed itself a majestic symbol of God, a wondrous type of God's infinity, all-pervadingness, aboveness, and withinness. Moreover, nothing that we possess so adequately typifies God's purity. Mysterious, invisible, life-giving is this heaven of the atmosphere. "Its breath bloweth where it listeth, and one cannot tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth," said Jesus. "Like that is any one born of the spiritual world." This heaven of the atmosphere is pure, yet it penetrates every loathsome thing and cleanses it. There is heaven far above us, remote, inaccessible; yet that same heaven penetrates to our innermost

parts. In it the whole world lives and moves and has its being; it enters the damp mould beneath our feet, it vitalizes the buried germs, it mounts up with the tree trunk, and crowns the loftiest boughs of the forest with its glory. It makes the blood of man to leap with life, it dwells within his brain cells, it flashes from his eye and paints his cheek with color. This heaven, not the mere chemical combination of oxygen and nitrogen, but the sunlit atmosphere pervaded by all its causative energies, is forever coördinating itself with physical life, forever coming upon earth. In the beauty of the lily, in the toughness of the oak fibre, in the bloom and sweetness of the peach, in the toddling step of the child, in the stride of the man, in the nerve of the race-horse, it comes. It rises before us in living forms, blessing us, feeding us, healing us. Nowhere else surely can we find so perfect a symbol of Him who is both personality and force, who pervades everything, yet transcends everything, who reigns by giving life, who binds the universe together by an invisible tie, and whose kingdom of life is

forever coming while he himself remains unchanged.

To all great natures this heaven of the atmosphere has been a mighty word of God, through which God spoke on lonely mountain-top or desert sand, but especially to Jesus was it a symbol of God, and of the eternity that He inhabiteth. It was not the spiritual world, but it was its material symbol and expression. That world itself was indeed to him a high and holy height, infinitely remote from sin. Yet it was also close at hand. It was potentially present within all men. "The kingdom of God is within you." The altitude of spiritual force is not physical but moral, not in the scale of inches but of causation. Heaven is reached not by ascending the clouds, but by penetrating deeper within the heart, by extending man's consciousness far into the recesses of his own being. It was in such a sense as this doubtless that he said of himself, the lowly born peasant, that he had come down out of heaven, for in the same connection he declared that no man can come down from heaven save he that hath ascended into

heaven. In his own mysterious being he had climbed the steps of God-consciousness, till he had reached the Fatherland, and knew the mystery of his own preëxistence. He knew what was within him, for he had penetrated to it and held communion with it. He adds also in the same discourse this expression: "The Son of man is in heaven." The rose that is perfectly coördinated with the atmosphere becomes an organ of the heaven. Heaven's kingdom has come in it. It is in heaven, though it be upon earth. So the man that is a perfect organ of the spiritual world is forever in the spiritual heaven, though he *be* upon earth. Heaven may take new forms for him, it may blossom out into new glories, it may form new coordinations, it may rear visible structures, it may build a new and fair earth out of the old elements, it may raise up battlements of gold and open gates of pearl, but its inward quality will remain eternally the same.

With this conception of the word "heaven," it is plain to see what Jesus meant by "the kingdom of heaven" or "the

kingdom of God," which was to come. He meant the organic coördination of the spiritual with the material world. It was a gradual coördination, an evolution, if you please. It included, therefore, the development of a vast variety of organs and functions. Naturally, it was the kingdom of righteousness, for to his mind righteousness was reciprocity with God. The kingdom of heaven was at hand when he himself, the spiritual vine, the human stem of spiritual vitality, appeared in Galilee, clothed with the powers of the spiritual world. When his disciples, as his spiritualized organs, carrying his gospel, entered a village they were to say to men that the kingdom of God had come nigh to them, for its organic vitalities were then within their grasp. During his lifetime the kingdom was still in a germinant form; the seed was his word, full of his human personality, charged with organic love for humanity; and his word or gospel included also the record of his own life, interpreted as to its divine and human reciprocities by parables and miracles, statements of principles and their application,

and much direct outshining of the Fatherhood. But after his crucifixion, then in a peculiar sense the kingdom of God came. It came as the kingdom of nature comes when the corn of wheat has fallen into the ground and died. It came in his own new, organic manhood; his own resurrection body, capable of wider physical coördinations; it came with power, as he predicted it, on the day of Pentecost, in the form of a new religion, a new body of men with new powers, new vision, a new brotherhood. It has been coming through the ages in an endless variety of coördinations and spiritual embodiments. For wherever the spirit of Christ produces a new organ or unity, there the kingdom comes. But eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive how the kingdom of heaven shall come, with what mighty embodiments of the living God; with what wide-ranging physical coördinations, what literal ascent of man into the heavens; what new mansions of the soul; what cosmopolitan powers over the stellar universe; what god-like majesty of the human form itself;

what city of God, having her light like unto that of the sun. For if we are to take the testimony of Jesus, the kingdom of heaven, eternally the same in its spiritual force, yet stretches throughout the universe and is everywhere, even as here, a coördination with matter; yea, it already has in some distant parts of the universe attained its consummation; yea, already it holds for us, afar off among its organic developments, a literal paradise and a throne of God, to which he has ascended in our behalf, and where he is preparing a place for us.

Now in view of this, it becomes possible to reconcile those apparently contradictory statements of Jesus, in which he speaks of the spiritual realm sometimes as near, sometimes as remote, and often as coming while still it lingers. Sometimes in his parables he represents himself as though after his death he were to become a kind of absentee landlord. Yet in other passages he speaks of the coming of the Son of Man, not of his final coming, but of many intermediate comings. As though, in fact, his coming were to be a

constant feature of history. Again, he speaks in other places of being with his followers, even unto the end of the world. So, too, in regard to God: he sometimes represents God as though he were a great way off, even from his own people the Jews; like a king who has built a tower in some border province, and let it out to husbandmen, he holds communication at first only through servants, then as a last resort through his son, but he himself remains afar. Not only through the Old Testament, but through the New, this chill effect of distance is at times thrown about our relation to God. "He is in heaven, thou upon earth." Yet, as has been seen, the main current of Christ's teaching with regard to God is in the direction of God's nearness and indwelling. This, in fact, is the more vital side of the truth; it is the side on which all depends, and which, under the progress of the gospel, gradually absorbs the other. We see the harmony between these two sides, however, when we take in Christ's position as to the unity of the two worlds: when we see, moreover, that man is organic, and

that God deals with him as organic, and as being in part responsible for the condition of his organism. God is ever with man, as the atmosphere is ever with him, but man can only hold reciprocity with God, as with the atmosphere, through certain organs. The development of those spiritual organs is therefore not only man's highest privilege, but it is his most imperative duty. He is solemnly responsible for their atrophy. "Ye are God's husbandry." If the spiritual organs are not properly developed, then to all practical purposes God is indeed at a distance, his relationship becomes hard and mechanical, his realm a foreign realm, his commands antagonistic and alien.

The man is of the earth, earthy. Moreover, his earth has been disunited from heaven by his own will. God may still claim such a man as his own, for there is a potential reciprocity. He may seek to bridge the distance, he may visit the man as the sunlit heaven visits the earth, not only by its direct shining, and by the pure breath of its winds, but by its organic forms of fruit and flower and tree.

So God may seek to reach man, both pervasively and by organic contact. It is such seeking which Jesus interprets to us in the parable of the shepherd seeking the lost sheep. The coming of God, the presence of God, and the kingdom of God refer in every case to God's manifestation of himself in an organic world, through organic forms; and the distance of God from the world, wherever it occurs, is always due to one of two causes, — either the incomplete development of the organic form, or man's failure to cultivate the organ for its reception. We can understand, too, from this view-point the moral earnestness of Christ in pointing out the relation of the spiritual realm to man's moral nature. "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." It could only come through coördination with moral purpose. In the sermon on the mount he shows how it is coördinated with the spiritual organism, and how the spiritual organism is really the development of the moral organism into larger function and consciousness. He shows, too, distinctly, the fact that right and wrong are ques-

tions, not of mere conduct alone, but of organic coördination with two kingdoms. There is, on the one hand, the true, normal, constitutional unity of man with God. On the other hand, there is man's debasing unity with a de-spiritualized earth, a kingdom of evil. The organisms that connect us with that kingdom must be cut off, plucked forth, cast from us, or we shall be brought to its worm and fire, for it is essentially a kingdom of death.

CHAPTER VI.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

It is easy to see that this idea of Jesus concerning the kingdom of God lay at the very root of all that he said about the knowledge of God. We talk about God drawing near to men. Too often when we use that language it signifies to us a wholly invisible and intangible fact, so subtle as only to be appreciated, if at all, by the most delicate and sensitive nature. On the contrary, to the mind of Jesus the approach of God was identical with the coming of his kingdom with the Entrance of the Word. It was the development of those organic forms by which the spiritual and material world were coördinated; and the presence of God was an objective organic manifestation of him. Undoubtedly, in the grander and more eternal sense of the word the presence of God does signify his purely spiritual ex-

istence and self-disclosure. Such may be the presence of God to a being capable of apprehending it. But the foundation idea of such terms as "nearness" and "presence" is that of relationship to our own faculties. A thing is present when it comes within the range of our faculties. It draws near in proportion as it subjects itself to their scrutiny. Now, as man is an organic being whose field of knowledge is the material world, and whose faculties exert their activity through the five senses, the presence of a being, so far as man is concerned, signifies the presentation of him within the field of material objects and within the range of the five senses. And this was what the divine presence signified to Jesus as the helper of men. This, too, was what it signified to Moses. When Moses besought God for his presence he was not asking for a purely spiritual propinquity; this he already possessed for himself. He meant a phenomenal manifestation such as would support the heart and flesh of God's people. And when God declared that his presence would be perilous to the Israelites, He meant that any honest em-

bodiment of his personality in the field of natural phenomena would take the shape of devouring fire toward such a people as the Israelites had shown themselves to be. For such an embodiment as the crucified Jesus was, in that stage of development, impracticable and incomprehensible.

We have reached then this point. To the mind of Jesus the presence of God signified an objective organic embodiment of his person and character. God drew near to men in proportion as his character was embodied, and in proportion as the embodiment was within the range of man's perceptive faculties. This shuts out of the question altogether a great deal of the thought associated in men's minds with the knowledge of God. The knowledge of God commonly conceived of by men is of two sorts. First there is a vague, subtle, emotional experience peculiar to highly wrought organizations that is fairly described in its various forms by the term "transcendentalism." It is wholly exceptional and sporadic. It could never become a popular possession, and it is questionable how far it can ever be dis-

tinguished from mere subjectivity. At all events it has thus far deservedly failed to commend itself to the practical sense of mankind. Doubtless much of what has been thought to be the "new birth," or "the work of the Spirit," deserves to be classed under this head of transcendental knowledge. How much of a reality it contains may be questioned. But taken by itself it certainly presents no practical field of knowledge to mankind.

On the other hand, to philosophers generally the term "knowledge of God" signifies the intellectual comprehension of Him, or the logical proof of Him, which comes to pretty much the same thing. Taking this notion of the word "knowledge," some of our philosophic thinkers have declared that God was unknowable. And in a sense this is true. To know God intellectually would be to know his mode of existence, and that a finite being can understand an Infinite mode of existence seems indeed absurd. It is a case of the less containing the greater. It is true that we can form for ourselves a certain notion of the Infinite. But that

notion is rather imaginative than intellectual. It is gained, for instance, in one way by presenting to our imagination an ever-widening area of space. This affords us, however, only a symbol of Infinity, and as a matter of fact we have no clear notion of space itself. Or, if we ascribe a more limited meaning to the term and understand the intellectual knowledge of God to mean the logical knowledge of Him, or the proof of his existence, we are confronted with a similar difficulty. Since it is impossible for us to state what God is, we are unable to construct the proposition we are called upon to prove.

To be sure, at first sight it seems as though the moral problem would be sufficiently met by proving the existence of an all-wise and all-loving Creator. But the moment we attempt the task we are confronted with endless argumentation as well as mystification, growing out of the fact that we have not settled definitely what creation is, nor what personality is. Neither have we settled the question what an absolute wisdom and love are in their essence or manifestation; while, on the other

hand, we are arrested by the fact that our knowledge of the phenomena of this world, and particularly their origin and outcome, is far too limited to furnish us with satisfactory proof of such qualities. Even when we give up the idea of an infinite wisdom and goodness, and attempt to prove simply the proposition of a good and wise Creator, we disagree at once over two questions: First, what are goodness and wisdom; and, secondly, what would be their manifestation in the development and training of such beings as ourselves. Without an agreement on these questions we have no starting-point from which to reason. Indeed, as we turn to ourselves, we encounter the most radical difficulty of all. Here, in fact, is where the shoe pinches, for we speedily discover that we have no adequate intellectual knowledge of ourselves. It may truly be said that we have not experienced our own selves. We do not know our *own* mode of existence. The distinction between mind and matter, if there be such a distinction, the genesis of moral obligation, the value of Reason in its present stage, — all these involve prob-

lems whose solution is beyond our reach. Really, so far as our intellectual knowledge is concerned, it may be said that while it is very essential to us, and practical when combined with other kinds of knowledge, it is nevertheless wholly relative and superficial. It does not penetrate anywhere to the mystery of existence. We do not even know the mode of existence of the material world. The molecules of matter are to us a mere hypothesis. Nor have we any absolutely intellectual proof of the existence of matter. We accept it on the testimony of feeling rather than of reason. If, then, the limitation of our intellectual faculties is such that we cannot furnish any strictly logical proof of the very arm-chair in which we sit, if we cannot know its mode of existence nor its essence, then how can we expect to possess intellectual knowledge of God?

Religious people have often been alarmed by the assertion that God was unknowable. But if we take it in the only sense in which it is true, the purely intellectual sense, it applies also to everything else. You are unknowable, so am

I, so is this table on which I write, so is the violet whose fragrance you inhale, so is the water that you drink, and the bread that you eat, and the child that you hold in your arms. In the purely intellectual sense, each one of these is unknowable. You cannot form a complete logical proof for the existence of any of them. You can prove it, doubtless, to satisfy yourself, or, as you would express it, "to satisfy any reasonable man," but you cannot prove it to the absolute satisfaction of logic itself, nor to the mind of a man who insists on being bound by logic alone. To such a man the external universe will still remain unproved. And it is quite possible for any human being to bring about in himself such an abnormal preponderance of the logical faculty, and such a shrinkage of the perceptive power, that he shall be capable of doubting the existence of the external world. It remains, therefore, that, in the intellectual sense, not only is God unknowable, but everything else is unknowable. And the only reason why we attach peculiar importance to God's unknowability is because we are too much

accustomed to think of him as knowable only in the intellectual way, particularly in the way of proof. As a matter of fact, however, it is not by the pure reason that we gain what we call a realization of things. On the contrary, the very attempt to rationalize knowledge is apt to minimize realization. Indeed, as we apply the purely logical method only to objects that are not within the range of a more direct kind of knowledge, the very attempt to prove them makes them seem more unreal, not only because it classifies them with things that cannot be seen, and therefore makes them hang upon proof rather than sight, but also because the concentration of one's whole attention on the process of logic shrinks up the perceptive powers themselves, and throws their field into shadow. Now, a man may have sufficient logical proof of a friend's existence to satisfy his reason, but if, through failure of eyesight, he cannot see his friend's face, he is truly in darkness, for if darkness means anything, it means the obscuration of the perceptive powers; they alone give us that gladsome consciousness which we call

vision. They, too, give us realization, nor does any amount of proof make up for their absence.

It is plain, therefore, what Jesus meant when he spoke of the Pharisees, those cultivated religious men of his day, as being in darkness; he did not mean that they were ignorant of scriptural facts, nor entirely destitute of theistic proof; he meant that their perceptive faculties were so obscured that they could not realize God's personal presence; and when he said that they knew not the Father, his language corroborated this position, for it implied that the knowledge which they lacked was that sort of personal acquaintanceship which is based upon perception, just as the term "Father," itself, implies a closeness of relationship with human faculties. Now, if, as Jesus taught, there is such a thing as an earthly embodying of God's presence within the range of our perceptive faculties; if, in short, God is knowable through our perceptive powers, then, of course, that is the only practical and reasonable way to attempt the knowledge of Him; and any other kind of knowledge must be, as com-

pared to this, mere blindness and darkness. The utmost that we can obtain by the logical method is, as has been seen, a strong probability, and that will always vary with the individual mind. If, therefore, such a thing be possible as the actual perception of God, carrying with it that certitude and joyful realization that characterizes perception generally, it is indeed glad tidings, as Jesus called it, glad tidings of the kingdom, and is of the highest import to man's religious nature. More than that; in basing itself upon spiritual perception, Christianity radically differentiates itself from all other religions. But there can be no doubt that this was the position of Jesus. At the very outset, in describing the blessedness of the kingdom, he declared, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," a perfectly logical sequence from his description of the kingdom itself. Furthermore, although he came, as he declared, above all things else to give men the knowledge of God, yet he never presented any proof of the divine existence; indeed he surprised his followers by the minor importance that he

attached to proof, even concerning his own authority. The condition of that kind of knowledge which he came to give, he plainly stated. It was light, not proof. Light is the condition of perception, and it was this which he considered himself as in a peculiar sense empowered to give. Moreover, the fact that he did give it constituted his authority. According to the fourth Gospel, he declared, "I am the light of the world." Light is its own authority. In the Sermon on the Mount, he says practically the same thing, for he tells his disciples that they, illuminated by his teaching, are the light of the world. And his procedure entirely agrees with these two statements. Throughout the first three Gospels he adopts a definite method of imparting spiritual knowledge. Whether it be the immanence of the Father, or his own sonship to God, he does not at first assert it, nor ever prove it, but he endeavors to train, to elevate, and to purify the perceptions of his disciples. That is the object of discipleship. Many of the things that he taught have been said more or less perfectly by others, nor would they all

together have taken anything like three years to utter them. It was to the training of the perceptive powers of his disciples, to the impartation of light, to the radiation of a certain luminous personal atmosphere, so that things before darkly held now stood forth like midday realities, — it was to these things rather than to logical proof that Jesus gave himself during those three years. The process of unfolding intuition, the uniting and focalizing of all the perceptive energies upon spiritual manifestations, — this it was that he watched with the keenest solicitude, as when he took them apart at Philippi and said, "Whom do ye say that I am?" His whole heart waited for the culmination of that perceptive development. It harmonizes with the statement in the fourth Gospel, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father, and how sayest thou then, show us the Father." What possible other way is there of showing or demonstrating God's existence, He being the Father, but that He should be seen like any other father, through an embodiment of Him? As to the disciples themselves,

when the process was completed, the notion they themselves give us of it is that it was a kind of joyful perception. It was "walking in the Light." It was seeing God in the face of Jesus Christ. It was certitude, realization; not proof, but sight. Their whole attitude and conduct were those of men who are actuated by the warm reality of vision, rather than by the cold and purely intellectual effect of proof.

This brings us squarely to the question, What is perception, and what are the laws on which it is conditioned? for just here it is that the whole issue lies between Jesus and the skeptic or agnostic. The essential position has not altered one particle. As regards the position of Jesus, the skeptic and agnostic of to-day occupy precisely the ground held by the Pharisees in Christ's time. The situation could not be better sketched than it is in the third chapter of John. Nicodemus was what one might call an honest agnostic; he was better than his party, though unfortunately timid; he came to Jesus by night, and put the case as honestly as he knew

how. Rabbi, he said, we understand your position; we know you are a teacher come from God; your miracles indicate that, but you go farther than they warrant you in going; you preach the kingdom of the Messiah; your disciples baptize in your name. That implies that you are the Messiah; but for this latter fact you give us no adequate evidence; your miracles are no greater than those of the other prophets, — not so great as some of them. We are therefore left without proof. We understand the limits of religious knowledge. You ought to understand them. Without proof our responsibility ends. That was the agnostic position squarely put. Agnosticism seems innocent, as when the Pharisees replied to Christ's question whether John's baptism was from heaven or of men, "We cannot tell." Such an attitude creates a false impression of helplessness; it appears to throw the responsibility on God or his prophet, but in reality this position is always the arrogant "we know" of the Pharisaic school.

Instead of being a confession of weakness, it is the assumption of intellectual

authority; it defines the nature and limitations of evidence, and asserts the entire adequacy of the reason and external perception as criteria of knowledge; nay, more, it dares to estimate what is beyond its experience, to take up the sceptre of the spiritual universe, to tell men the limit of their moral obligation and assign to Jesus his place. Jesus understood the situation perfectly. His reply was in effect, Not proof, Nicodemus, but sight is what you want, in order to judge of a Messiah; and he then proceeds to state the law for the evolution of spiritual perception, which law he implies the Pharisees had neglected when they refused to come to the baptism of John. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." The explanation of this passage I shall take up in its proper place, and shall then show that the new birth is simply the organic culmination under Christ of an embryonic spiritual process, an earthly fact that had been developing from the first under the Hebrew prophets, and particularly under the baptism of John. Multitudes of the Jewish people had flocked to him and had

submitted themselves to his purifying ministry. Thus their spiritual vision was both cleansed and broadened, and from their ranks came the men who first hailed Jesus as the Messiah. The Pharisees, however, would not thus discredit their culture, which was the ground of their authority; they stood aloof in a critical attitude, resenting the idea that unlearned men could of themselves furnish any criterion of knowledge.

The reply of Jesus, therefore, was a rebuke to their attitude, and an assertion of the ultimate source of authority that exists in the perceptive heart of humanity when it is personally coördinated with God. And this brings us to the universality of perceptive knowledge; it is of the heart, and therefore distinctively human; other forms of knowledge belong to peculiar classes, but perception belongs to the race; by it the child knows his father, though he cannot comprehend one thing concerning that father's existence, nor prove that existence to his own logical faculty. Yet he knows his father, for he feels him, or, in other words, feels his personality through

the senses. Life feels life, wherever that life is embodied before it. Thus, though we do not know what personality is and cannot agree about its definition, yet we all know persons, for we all feel them, and there can be no greater reality to us than what we thus feel. If a man's best friend is not real to him, nothing is. It is this kind of direct knowledge, the kind most certifying and most satisfying, that we can have concerning God. By it the feeblest may know the greatest, the finite may know the Infinite, the earthly child may know his Heavenly Father.

This was certainly the position of Jesus. It was not a theory merely, but a fact of his consciousness to which he bore testimony, not by words alone, but by a life of suffering, and by a death on the cross. He rejoiced, however, in this testimony, for his inner consciousness told him that God always felt men, their joys, sorrows, and needs, and that men had in them a potentiality for feeling God. This was to his mind the foundation of all righteousness; to develop it into perception was therefore, naturally enough, the road to

the knowledge of God, and this personal knowledge was of vital significance morally, for it was itself the root of all holy love. While therefore Jesus undoubtedly sought to teach men and to set an example of righteousness, that side of his mission appeared to him relatively insignificant. It could not secure our moral salvation. Neither ethical culture, nor the intellectual knowledge of God, can bring men into living reciprocity with Him; the kingdom of righteousness is a kingdom of God-consciousness. The Christ must therefore of necessity be the supreme personal revelation of God to man. But a being, capable of making such a revelation, must be in himself an unfathomable mystery. Child-like souls may through him find the Father, but no human reason can comprehend him; a divine manifestation must be above the reach of human reason. Thus he comforted himself when great men and great cities rejected him. Another man would have been cast down at his own apparent insignificance; but Jesus rejoiced at a fact which overthrew the tyranny of intellect and exalted the

simple heart of humanity to its rightful heritage in the knowledge of the Father. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things in this humble guise of my Galilean manhood from the wise and intellectual, and hast revealed them unto babes." No one knoweth the Son save the Father, neither doth any one know the Father, save the Son and he to whom the Son willeth to reveal Him. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." So at the historic point called Calvary the mystery of the universe embodies itself; the life of the world draws near; there may life feel life.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LAWS OF PERCEPTION.

PERCEPTIVE knowledge being the foundation of Christ's righteousness, it was reasonable that he should lay great stress upon our use of the perceptive faculties. Like all the organs, he regarded them as governed by certain laws, and there was nothing in regard to which he uttered more solemn or more frequent warnings than concerning this very matter of obedience to the laws of perception. These laws, as stated by him, are three in number: they are Simplicity, Purity, and Spirituality.

In saying that Jesus laid down three great laws of perception, I do not of course mean that he did it in precise terms, for he never used scientific language, or taught after the scientific manner; but the things he insisted upon in his popular teaching as the conditions of perception are reduci-

ble to what we call laws, and of those laws there are the three which I have just stated. First, let us take the law of Simplicity. "If thine eye be single," said Jesus, "thy whole body shall be full of light." The word translated "single" is, in the original, "simple;" but, whichever we use, it comes to the same thing; for, if it is to make any sense at all, it must be taken as referring to the focus of the eye. Jesus was a close observer of nature; he never meant to say that the less complex an eye was, the better it was; that a man with a single eye could see better than a man with two eyes, and a man with only a pupil could see better than one with the eyeball and retina besides, or that in the higher process of perception a man with nothing but a conscience could detect moral truth better than a man who had also reason, affection, and imagination. If, however, we take his language as applying to the focus of the eye, it becomes clear, and does indeed enunciate for us, in a singularly vivid and concise way, the first condition of all perception, for it is the focusing of the eye that makes it a perceptive organ, and of

course everything depends on the focus being single or simple. But what is the focusing of an eye? Obviously it is the perfect coördination as well as subordination of all the parts with reference to a single centre. Thus in each eye of a man all the parts are so perfectly coördinated about the optic axis, and so perfectly subordinated in structure and density to the business in hand, that a single image is made in front of the retina. Likewise the nerves of both eyes are so coördinated with a single nerve centre, and so subordinated to that centre, as to produce a single impression upon it. The nerve centre is the vital focus for the perceptive process; all the other functions and forces are subordinated to that. Not absolute simplicity or singleness then, but that kind of simplicity which we observe in the physical eye and in other organs of nature, — a simplicity which consists in the perfect and coördinate subordination of all the parts to a single vital centre, — *that* is the first law of perception.

But what, according to Christ, constitutes the organism of perception? Evi-

dently all the powers, whether external or internal, by which facts are grasped in our consciousness. In Matthew xiii. 14, 15, Jesus complains that the people saw, or, in other words, used their external vision, without attaining to real perception, because their heart had become gross. This imperceptive condition of the heart shut up the exterior organs from any fair use. In other words, the heart was the interior organ of perception, and the coördination of the exterior organs with it was necessary to the complete function. But what did Jesus mean by the "heart"? To the modern mind it is rather a vague term. Quite commonly it signifies the seat of the more unreliable emotions, and is therefore the last centre of consciousness to be selected as the organ of perception. This, however, was not the meaning of the word to the Jews or to Jesus. In this very passage he declares the function of the heart to be understanding, — at least that is the translation; but the Greek word signifies a putting together, like that which the interior nerve-centre accomplishes for both the eyes, so as to form a single image. It

meant, in fact, the focusing by the heart of the various objective impressions that enter through the external organs into a distinct mental and moral impression. This comes as near as we can get to the Greek *suniemi*. And this, doubtless, was the meaning of Jesus. To understand was to perceive intelligently an external object, so that all its facts, mental, moral, emotional, stood together in a perfect, proportional effect. As has been already intimated, this kind of perception is better described by our word "insight" than by "understanding," which we have relegated to the logical faculty. Now the Jewish sacred writers used the word "heart" in a large and serious sense; they included under it the intellect, imagination, will, and conscience, as well as the feelings. "As a man *thinketh* in his heart, so is he." "As each man *purposeth* in his heart, so let him do." "And when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts," evidently referring to their conscience. In fact, to the Jewish conception, the heart was not separate from any of the interior faculties or sensibilities. It was all of them, acting

coördinately in a process of choice and issuing in conduct. It was really the soul viewed interiorly.

To be sure, some say there is no soul; that is, however, a question of words. There is such a thing as a dead body; it is, as we say, inanimate; what animated it? Life. Life is the sphinx whose mystery no scientist can solve. Some say it is simply a material force; but what difference does it make whether you call it material or spiritual, so long as the same things can be predicated of it? One thing is clear: the life feels and knows. We have then only to deal with the question of how much it can feel and know. That is, of course, to be settled by experience. The point to be guarded is that it is really the life which sees. But the moment we examine this process of seeing, we find that it is in the last analysis feeling. Through the optic nerve the life feels the image focalized upon the retina. Through our various organs the life within us feels the external world. "Feeling" is the general word by which we describe the varied forms of vivid consciousness

possessed by the life. That is the first essential, decided characteristic of life: it is sensitive, that is, it feels. By this sensitiveness or feeling, it knows the external world, it knows the warmth and glory of the sunlight, the fragrance of the violet, the satisfaction of bread, the refreshingness of cold water, the sharpness of fire, and the strength of iron. Thus the life in us knows directly the quality of things about it. This is its ultimate form of knowledge, — it knows the quality of the universe as related to itself. It knows in the sense of enjoying and suffering. It is the life itself that knows, not because some faculty reports to it, but because it experiences. Enjoyment and suffering are knowledge.

True, it may be objected that feeling is often illusory; that in any case, it gives us only the secondary qualities of matter; and that as regards the ultimate reality of the external world, we have nothing to trust but our feeling that it exists. We have, for instance, no logical demonstration that there is any actual existence corresponding to the vision of the locomotive which we

see approaching us, as we walk upon the track; but the struggle for existence, which is nature's logic, forces us irresistibly in two directions, namely, to discipline our feelings and to trust them.

However irrational it may be to trust our undisciplined feelings, it is still more irrational not to trust feeling at all. The man who does not get off the track when he sees the locomotive coming, because he believes himself conscious only of the secondary qualities of matter, demonstrates the unreasonableness of philosophy. Feeling and doing must stand together somehow in a logical unity; we may not know what we know, for the contents of our knowledge may be obscure. The vision of the locomotive may be only on the retina, — it may be caused in part by solar radiation, partly by changes in our own nervous tissue; but the testimony of our feeling that there is something coming, with which we have to do, something that calls for the putting forth of external force, is surely the logic of life. Faith in that logic of life is sane and rational, precisely as the action that issues from distrust of it is insane and irrational.

Not only does the life feel the material universe, but it feels itself, it feels its own existence and enjoys it, — is moreover loth to part with it. "I feel, therefore I am," is sound logic, more satisfactory perhaps than the other proposition, "I think, therefore I am." A healthy man has a vivid sense of his own existence; that is the most logical ground for believing in it. And not only does a man feel his own life, but he feels other lives. This is the case even with the lower animals. The mother bird feels the life of her fledgelings; she cannot prove their existence logically, but she knows it, for she is keenly sensitive to it. If the life be taken from her little brood, the dead fledgelings will not comfort her; she knows the difference, she feels the absence of life. Much more is this the case with human beings. The life within the babe feels the mother life brooding over it, and nestles close to it with sweet content. The little child cannot prove the existence of his father's life, but it is a joyful certitude to him. When the father dies, he misses it, for life feels life. And not only does it feel

life, but it has what we call "sympathy;" it can feel for life, — can feel the sufferings, joys and needs of other lives. This, too, is the case with lower animals. A wounded animal is often assisted by other animals, sometimes even at their own risk. The mother partridge will venture her own life to save her young. Sacrifice for others is not an infrequent thing in the brute creation. Life feels for life at times with a great and yearning sensitiveness; and this feeling of life for life in ourselves is what we call "humanity." It is unquestionably a form of perception; it is the life within us, feeling the quality of things, feeling the lives about us, and feeling for those lives.

Feeling is a vital force, and like all other vital forces is dependent for its strength and vividness and clearness, not only on the fullness of one's general vitality, but on specific use and training. A man whose vitality is in any way exhausted or dull, a man who has treated his sensibility as an untrustworthy force, substituting in its stead the logical faculty, or a man who has allowed the sensibility within him to re-

main undisciplined, cannot expect to have much of that kind of definite realization which a vigorous life and a disciplined sensibility afford. To the neglected or undisciplined heart, life must always appear half real and out of proportion, as it would to a feeble and untrained eye. To sum up matters, it is the life itself, by virtue of its sensitiveness, that sees, or, in other words, feels, and thus becomes directly conscious of things; for sensitiveness or consciousness is the intrinsic quality of life. It is true that we do feel with our bodily organs, but the bodily organ has neither sensitiveness or existence without the life; when the life departs it ceases to be an organ. It may therefore justly be said that it is the life which feels; it certainly is the causative force in the process, the material part of the organ simply supplying the conditions under which the feeling is exercised. Exactly what those conditions are, or how far they are essential, we do not know, but we do know that the conditions are somewhat elastic. Sometimes the life exhibits a singular power to act independently of the conditions, and

this power of the life to act independently of the conditions and organs we call by various names, such as animal magnetism, clairvoyance, and hypnotism. But whatever we call it, it is simply a power, possessed by this altogether mysterious life-principle, to act independently of the organs through which it usually works.

Of course it makes little difference what we call the life; the Romans called it the "anima," from which we get the words "animal" and "animation." The Greeks called it the "psyche," from which comes our word "psychical." The Anglo-Saxons called it "soul." More lately this latter word has acquired a metaphysical and theological meaning that has destroyed its simplicity. In the New Testament the word put into the mouth of Jesus, by the writers of the gospel, is this Greek "psyche." It is sometimes translated "life" and sometimes "soul." "Soul" is a good word, if we keep clear of the later metaphysical and theological meanings, and hold it to the good old Saxon sense. Taking it then in the sense of "life," it may be said that the soul itself directly perceives when it feels.

But there is another element that enters into this process of perception; there is a power that we call "reason." Reason does not give us external facts; it cannot feel the quality of things, but by means of it we see the relation between things. For instance, a man feels a sharp pain in his hand; he looks down and sees he has rested his hand on the point of a tack. Reason shows him the relation between those two things. In the lowest animals we see reason, or, rather, intelligence, which is really the dawn of the same thing acting just as it does with us. By it the fish perceives the relation between the feeling of hunger and the worm that floats in the water, and if there be a fish-hook concealed within the worm, intelligence enables him to perceive the relation between it and the prick which he receives. By putting together feeling and intelligence he becomes a clearer-sighted and a warier fish. By thus showing us the relation between different feelings and sensations, reason enables us to group facts, and so to reach not only distinct ideas, but unities or wholes. For example, the

dawning intelligence in the babe enables it to see the relation between the mother's face that smiles down upon it, and the motherly arms that are stretched out to it, and the motherly word that says "Come." Reason shows that they are all the manifestations of that one loving, sympathizing life, which the child feels with its life. Thus, by the coördination of feeling with reason the child distinctly perceives the mother. As the crystalline lens gathers the rays of light into a focus, and thus causes them to make no vague impression, but a distinct image, so reason defines and converges the impressions of our consciousness into clearly related facts. It may therefore fairly be said that the soul or life-principle, whether in animals or man, directly perceives the external world by the coördinate action of sensibility and reason. Of course philosophers may easily raise the question whether perception can be trusted, but there can be no doubt as to what perception is.

Between the brute and the man, however, there is a wide difference. Take a highly intelligent horse and put him be-

fore Michael Angelo's Last Judgment; he can see the canvas, but neither the truth nor the beauty portrayed upon it. A man, however, can perceive both, for in him the elements both of reason and sensibility are much more highly developed. In man, reason has reached a more complex form. Sensibility also has developed and differentiated itself into a class of powers called "æsthetic," in which the strands of sensibility and intelligence are so closely woven that it is impossible to distinguish feeling from thought, or thought from feeling. For example, the true artistic sense gives us not only the enjoyment of a work of art, but its relative value. When a genuine artist looks at the Venus de Milo, he feels not only its exquisite beauty, but its transcendent position in the scale of beauty. Thus, by what appears to be a pure sensibility, we have conveyed to us two aspects of an external fact, namely, quality and relationship.

The same is true in regard to what we call "conscience." By conscience we feel the moral quality of motives, actions, and choices, but by the same power we also

feel moral values and relationships. A soldier, wounded and athirst, hesitates to drain the small cup of water, with which he is about to slake his thirst, when he sees a suffering comrade by his side. On the one hand is an intense sensibility to his own want; on the other, a noble sensibility to that of his neighbor. To which shall he yield? Reason points plainly out the superficial relationship of either act, without going to the bottom of the question of relationships; but if the man yields to the more selfish motive and proceeds to drain what he should have shared, conscience gives a painful throb, precisely as the ear of the musician does when a discord is made. The ear of a musician is sensitive to the musical scale; it is æsthetic, or, in other words, wholly perceptive; it combines both sensibility and intelligence; it gives both quality and relationship. It feels not only the sweetness but the value of every note; it feels discords, harmonies, musical sequences, correlations, — in short, the whole universe of music. In like manner conscience is sensitive, not only to the goodness or badness of deeds, but to the

relative value of impulses; it feels which is the higher note of conduct, and which the lower; you can write out the whole moral scale by observing and taking down its throbs. Of course I am speaking now of a finely developed and properly cultivated conscience, just as I was speaking a moment ago of a properly developed and cultivated ear for music. Consciences vary just as musical or artistic taste does; they exist in all stages of development, culture, and neglect. Nevertheless it is true of consciences, as of artistic taste or musical ears, that their testimony verges toward a unity in proportion as they are developed and properly cultivated, for conscience is a perceptive organ, not a pure, *a priori* principle of reason. It does not predict; it cannot tell us save of what it has experienced. The conscience of the savage does not inform him beforehand that the forgiveness of injuries is a higher impulse than revenge; but when he feels that forgiveness extended toward himself, so that its quality comes fairly within the range of his experience, then conscience, if it acts normally, throbs with recognition of the

higher motive. Not only so, but by that same throb of conscience we feel the highest when it touches us, and likewise solemnly feel it to *be* the highest, nothing less than the throne of glory and the fount of authority.

Furthermore, conscience does, by this same vivid sense of values, feel the identity of the highest with all divinity, power, and eternity, as when the Roman centurion, beholding the motives that animated Christ, called out, "Truly this is the Son of God." Moreover, by that same vivid instinct or prescience does conscience feel the discord and the horror of departure from the highest. It is sensitive to the law of our being involved in the moral scale, and to that majestic eternal law involved in our having within us the highest; for conscience catches, as it were, the thunderings that come from beneath the throne of eternal righteousness; it feels the holiness of the moral law, its awful authority, its inevitable coördination with the issues of life and the facts of the hereafter, and therefore shudders at its violation, as at the pulling down of the pillars of the sky,

for like the musical ear it is sensitive to all harmonies and possible correlations, — it feels the unity between the moral and the physical. It has a dread intuition of that correspondence between moral conduct and external consequence, which we call desert. Thus that throb of conscience has given us, not only the sense of right and wrong, but the moral universe.

Clearly, therefore, conscience is the true perceptive centre, since it is, of all the perceptive elements, the highest, and it is by moral perception alone that we are enabled to put together all things that we see in their complete whole; for, of course, it is impossible that we should completely see any group of facts until we see them in this highest relationship to ourselves. It is when we view them as related to the heart, or, in other words, as motives to choice and action, that their significance is complete, for all things must stand together finally in this highest relationship. Conscience is therefore not only the organ of moral perception, but the true centre of all perception. Based on its perceptive powers, we have the knowledge of the

highest good; of the divine sovereignty; of fundamental law, eternal righteousness, and of character in general; and based on this feeling of character, we have those sensibilities toward righteous character which we call "moral affections," that hatred of evil character which we call "condemnation," and that pitying disposition to redeem it which we call "grace." Now it needs little argument to show the reasonableness of Christ's demand.

These are all elements of perception, and a complete perceptive act involves the coördination of them all and their subordination to conscience as the perceptive centre, and this coördination or putting together is the Greek *suniesis*, or understanding of the heart, to which Jesus referred. If in this *suniesis*, or putting together, any element of perception is eliminated, perverted, or exaggerated, then by just so much the perception is obscured, the understanding of the heart is impaired. The first great law of perception, then, is simplicity, or, in other words, the perfect coördination of all the perceptive elements, exterior and interior, in subordination to the perceptive

centre, namely, conscience. Here, then, is the second point of divergence between Jesus and his critics. The position has not changed since the time of the Pharisees. The first point of divergence was, that the critics insisted primarily upon proof of the divine majesty, whereas Jesus insisted that the majesty was a thing to be lived, not proved, — that, like other facts of nature, it belonged to the department of perceptive knowledge. With facts of that class, proof is always a subsidiary affair. The true method of presentation is to quicken the intuition by more and more vital embodiments of the truth. Thus, when Nicodemus expressed the blind criticism of his party and the necessity of some great miracle to awaken their faith, Jesus did not promise a greater miracle or a more intellectual proof, but he said the Son of man must be lifted up. The truth must have a more profound and tragical symbolism, an embodiment that will sink deeper into the hearts of men. The second point of divergence is as has just been stated; Jesus insists on a complete coördination of all the elements of perception,

upon the focalization of the eye, upon the understanding of the heart. The divine majesty which he reveals is a moral fact; it is a divine character; it is nothing less than the highest; it is potentially within every man, a thing which every man's conscience is adapted to perceive, provided it be properly developed, disciplined, and coördinated with the other powers; therefore Jesus insists on that self-adjustment which we call "moral discipline." To his disciples he said, "Unto you, who receive my discipline, it is given to see the things of the kingdom of God, but to them that are without it is not given, for seeing they see and do not perceive."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LAW OF PURITY.

In the fifth chapter of Matthew, Jesus, responding to the religious longings of his people after a supernatural deliverance, announces the presence of that supernaturalism, and declares how great and what kind of a deliverance it is. No language of prophet or psalmist, no angelic hymn of the nativity, has pictured too vividly the blessings that are to flow from it. But, Jesus reminds them, it is like all nature's blessings, it operates through organic law, and is for those only who have organs fitted to take it in. A spirit so surfeited with the world, so gross, as to be unconscious of spiritual want; sensibilities so occupied with fleshly gratification as to have no appetite for righteousness; or an egotistic mind, — surely such organs as these can get nothing out of this pure and holy manifestation of the Father. Happy

are those, he says, in whom the divine hand has shaped through poverty, sorrow, or moral struggle a better organism, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Particularly is this the case with those whose perception has been purified. To them the new supernaturalism will indeed bring a beatific vision, things that prophets and kings have longed to see, nay, that angels have desired to look into. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

The law of simplicity merges into the law of purity, and explains it. In its light we see exactly what the peril is that besets all true insight. Without the proper development and discipline of the sensibility, insight comes to nothing. There is no element of realization. The life is thrown out of actual touch with the external world; it becomes devitalized, and dimly realizes even its own existence. Indeed, *all* existence is to it a shadow. Everything must be proved, yet proof is unsatisfying, for it was designed to corroborate insight, not to supplant it. On the other hand, the moment we attempt to discipline the heart into clear perception we encounter a super-

human task, arising from the fact that the organ of insight is also the organ of pleasure. By it, also, we feel pain, particularly the pain of weary endeavor, of resistance to temptation. The heart was made to see God, but the heart tastes and sees at the same time, and its gaze is riveted upon objects of lust, or sources of pride. Man has but so much sensibility. The soul cannot feel everything at the same time; still less can it feel strongly in opposite directions, nor can it endure to feel that which carries with it a strong rebuke. As Jesus expressed it, where the treasure is, there will the heart be also. The soul tends to fix upon some one object as the source of joy. It concentrates its feeling upon that object, goes out toward it, and so possesses it. Gradually it loses the power of exercising feeling in other directions. The psychic eye is formed, the focus of sensibility is determined; the result is that a man's feeling can only act perceptively in coördination with certain reasonings, imaginings, and choices. The instant he is called upon to see anything opposed to his heart's treasure, he is blind as regards sensibility.

Of course there is but one solution to this problem. The impurity is due to a wrong choice. It does not necessarily defile the eye to look upon an object of lust, but the will that decides to remain looking, *that* does indeed defile the eye, and, as the will itself becomes enslaved, it plunges the heart into deeper defilement, and makes its vision more distorted. We must not, however, think of the will as a separate faculty. It is the soul itself that defiles the feeling by deciding to use it as an avenue of base enjoyment. It is the soul alone that can purify the will by repenting, by taking another and a purer treasure, by plucking out the eye that offends, by fastening the sensibility upon a new and holy object, and so forming a new eye. As has been said, conscience points out the relation between the feelings, and it shows us which should be subordinate, which is sovereign and authoritative. It is when we thus coördinate feeling with conscience, subordinating it as conscience indicates, that we have what we call "moral perception," just as when we coördinate reason with feeling we have rational perception.

Now one of the first things we note in the life of Jesus is his persistent attempt to lay hold of men's enslaved wills, and turn them from this false treasure. He labors hard to secure moral perception. The kingdom of God, the manifestation of the supernatural, will be nothing to them, unless the soul or life can be led to take a true moral attitude. Repent, he says, for the kingdom of heaven is within reach; possession of that kingdom is a process of the heart; man sees, enjoys, possesses with the heart. Jesus dwells upon God's method of purification by stripping us of the objects of passion and pride. Happy, he says, are the poor, the mourners; those that have moral wants, that hunger and thirst for righteousness; the poor in spirit, those that are freed from egotism. In fact, Jesus dwells much, throughout the Gospels, on freedom from pride, self-glorification, and egoism of all kinds, declaring to his disciples that unless they become as little children, they cannot enter into — that is, experience — the kingdom of heaven. But the purification of feeling with Jesus meant a good deal more than the

withdrawal of the heart from evil. It meant the progressive yielding up of the sensibility to the highest good. As he expressed it in a parable, the kingdom of heaven is like a man, who, having found the pearl of great price, sells all he had for it. In other words, a man must put his perception to its noblest use, and then follow it up, for all he is worth. He must, as Jesus expressed it elsewhere, walk in the light, until he becomes a *child* of the light.

Only the constant laying hold by the soul of that which is noblest and highest in its environment, at the sacrifice of everything else, can possibly give it either real possession or steady vision of the spiritual world. On this positive principle alone is insight purified. Purity is, in fact, an element of simplicity. The feelings can only be refined by breaking up their coördination with all that is evil, and coördinating the life itself with absolute goodness; but this is not the whole of it. In fact, evil itself is not a positive external thing from which a man can separate himself. It is the absorption of feeling by something that is low and transitory, and therefore unworthy,

that constitutes the evil. There is no evil in the desire for food and clothing; there is evil in feeling so strong a desire for them, or taking so much satisfaction in them, as to be anxious about them. There is no evil in loving father and mother, only in loving them more than one who embodies to us a yet higher love. "He that loveth father and mother more than me, says Jesus, is not worthy of me;" a love that does not yield to the growth of a higher love is unfit. The purification of feeling therefore requires not only the coördination of the life with the highest embodiments in its environment, but the subordination of all other feelings to this process. This is, in fact, evolution; and if we strip the doctrine of evolution, as it is now taught, of all that is dubious and unproved,[1] we shall find the residuum to be, that the universe has been and *is being* developed by a progressive process of

[1] For a view of what science has not proved, see Lord Salisbury's address, as President of the British Scientific Association. For a statement of "the only doctrine of evolution that is indisputably true," see article on Christian Socialism (*Nineteenth Century*, November) by the Duke of Argyll.

organic coördination and subordination. This is the way in which the anima or life is shaped both in the lower orders and in man. By this process organs are developed and differentiated; one of the great facts of evolution is that the history of the individual corresponds to the history of the species.

If we take the life of a child we see that feeling first develops itself powerfully in the sensuous direction. Those sensibilities by which we enjoy the material universe first awake to consciousness. The child-life is keenly sensitive to physical pleasure or pain; it is plunged into misery by the prick of a pin, or a bruise on the head; it goes into ecstasies over a box of candy. Soon there comes a sharp struggle between what we call "animalism" and character, that is, between the primal sensibility of the anima and the dawn of a higher consciousness. This takes at first the form of sensibility toward the mother-life. This the child feels; feels its sympathy, its loving care; feels itself impelled to give itself up to that loving care. Parallel with this comes the sense of belong-

ingness and consequent obligation, which is the germ of conscience and also of moral faith. Still further on, if development progresses, the child comes to feel for the mother; feels her weariness and sacrifice, her pain and anxiety on its own behalf.

It strives to embody this higher sensibility in acts of faith, such as a more willing obedience, till at last, with purified and enlarged sensibilities, conjoined with growing intelligence, it perceives the mother-life in its wholeness, its righteousness, and its tender glory. It now for the first time has a purely invisible, intangible, supersensuous object, which it feels and enjoys, with which it is identified, for which it lives, and to which it subordinates all lower feelings. Having become coördinated with the mother's life, it is coördinated with all similar kinds of life; it belongs to that species, that type, that world of existences. In other words, it has developed into a spirit, not that it has ceased to be an anima or life, but the anima, or psyche, or soul, as the ancients called it, has assumed a higher type, and all its properties have been newly centred and vitalized.

This higher type of life we call "spirit." The word is a growing one; it has come down from the ancients; it meant at first the breath, possibly the divine breath, but at all events something supersensuous, both in its consciousness and vigor. We still cling to the same meaning. A man of spirit is a man who rises above certain forms of sensuousness, above the fear and the power of material things; he is to some extent freed from the slavish and childish domination of matter, — is not easily mastered by either physical pleasure or physical pain. So, too, our conception of a pure spirit is that of a soul or life, not chained to the body, dominating material things instead of being dominated by them.

We call such a being "supernatural." The Scripture calls him "spiritual." When Jesus said, "God is a Spirit," he was not attempting to tell us anything about God's mode of existence, but to convey to us the idea that God was morally raised above the sensuous plane of feeling and motive. In fact we need to be careful lest the words carry us too far, giving us the impression

that God has no life, or psychic existence such as would correlate Him with the universe and enable Him to be felt by us, and that his spirituality has in it no moral virtue. But, at any rate, so far as man is concerned, the spirit is the developed and purified psyche, or life, or soul, or anima. As St. Paul expresses it, first comes that which is psychical, afterwards that which is spiritual. The King James' version has mystified us, by translating the Greek word "psychical" into our word "natural;" had they then translated the word "spiritual" into our word "supernatural," it would have been all of a piece. The word "natural" is, however, a very poor translation, for there is in reality no such distinction. The spiritual is just as natural as the psychical, and our relation to God as natural as that to our own mother. The point of what I have been saying is this, that purification is inseparable from evolution. As has been said in a former chapter, the law of righteousness is the law of love, and is the development of man's reciprocity with God and his fellow-man into a complete spiritual em-

bodiment. This is accomplished through the man's identifying himself with the embodiment of divine love wherever, in his environment, he finds it. This is the law, not only of righteousness but of insight; it is the law for the evolution of the prophet, the seer, and the apostle. Nay, it is not only the law by which one sees the heavenly world, but the law by which alone one can possess and enjoy it. It might therefore almost be called the law of salvation itself. In fact, Jesus insisted upon it with great earnestness. Not only did he have his disciples baptize all adherents in his name, thus solemnly identifying them with himself and his ideal of purification, but he declared that the more crucial was the identification the greater would be the power to see and enjoy spiritual things. "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you for my name's sake. Great is your reward; for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you." Such is the course of the prophet's life, such the law of his development. No insight can be gained except

by a struggle with the sensuous element in us and about us. Evolution means struggle, conflict, subordination of the lower to the higher, coördination with the supreme. "Except a man bear his cross and come after me, he cannot be my disciple." The man who will enter the spiritual world must move with its organ onward and upward.

Concerning those who did not thus become his disciples, identifying themselves with his movement, he says, "In them is fulfilled the words of Isaiah the prophet. Seeing they see and do not perceive, their heart is waxed gross, their eyes have they closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and comprehend with their heart, and should turn, and I should heal them." So delicately, yet forcibly, does he picture that half conscious shrinking from the truth of the soul that anticipates its crucial import, and has determined to remain identified with the sensuous world. But it is in the fourth Gospel that the law of evolution is most plainly stated, in the talk with Nicodemus, to which I have already referred. Having stated that what

the Pharisees wanted was not proof but sight, he then proceeds to say that what is born of the flesh is flesh, what is born of the spirit is spirit, and forthwith enunciates the law of spiritual development in the expression, "Except a man be born of water and the spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God." Here he plainly refers to the purification of insight, for water was the great Jewish symbol of purification, and to the Jewish mind it was quite natural that the spirit of God should act in coördination with a symbolic embodiment like baptism. Furthermore, Nicodemus' own conscience could tell him what baptism it was that Jesus meant. The baptism of John was the one notable moral fact at that time; it was more than a fact; it was the sharpest kind of a moral issue. The vital question of the time then was, whether a man should identify himself with John or not, for all recognized John as a prophet, so that the question practically was, whether or not one would identify himself with God. The Pharisees recognized John's prophetic illumination, and his appeals touched their consciences; but to

submit to his baptism would be to give up their position of headship; it would be yielding the authority of culture and social position to the authority of a plain and somewhat uncouth but spiritual manhood. It was, in short, the old crucial struggle between flesh and spirit. The Pharisees would not give up their egotism; therefore they stood off and pretended that by virtue of their scholarship, their knowledge of the law, in short, their education, they possessed an independent criterion of religious knowledge. They criticised first John, then Jesus.

By this process they shut out their sensibilities from the spiritual forces and vitalities of their day, and shut their perceptive powers up to the withering effects of egotism. Isolated from God's great natural unities, they were perishing, like any isolated thing in nature, and of this Jesus warned them. In stating to Nicodemus the law of spiritual perception and evolution, which they had violated, he shows it to be no new thing, but a principle which Nicodemus, as a master of Israel, ought to have known; an earthly

phenomenon of religious life that came quite within his observation. By water and the spirit, — that is, by baptism, or, in general, by identifying themselves with purifying and God-given spiritual embodiments, — men had always developed more or less spiritual vitality. If Christ brought in a new birth, it was simply because identification with so perfect an embodiment as himself completed the embryonic process of development and ushered the soul into complete organic coördination with the spiritual world.

CHAPTER IX.

LIGHT.

The Condition of Perception.

THE general term employed by Jesus to describe his revelation of the supernatural was "light." This word stands in nature for the condition of all perception. True, it may be used in a vague sense; but Jesus did not so use it. His teaching was invariably consistent with its precise and naturalistic significance. Light does not take the place of the perceptive organs; it arouses, develops, and stimulates them; indeed, it is the original environment under which they are evolved.

Furthermore, it coördinates them with the external universe. It is by this coördination that light imparts knowledge; and in this respect it is a correct type of the whole revelatory process. Two men are groping about in the night; naturally they argue about their surroundings; day

breaks; light is poured in; discussion is at an end; argument and proof have lost their *raison d'être;* for these latter methods of knowledge belong to an imperceptive state. Besides, proof has small relation to the evolution of perception, — on the contrary, light is progressively creative; therefore, nature being as it is, we should expect that God would give his revelation by the element of light rather than of proof; and this was the precise position of Jesus. He was continually curbing the clamor of men for proof. Men demanded, Are you the Christ? His answer was in effect, Follow and see. The Christ must be lived, not proved. To live is to transmit. Thus, to live the life of God is to transmit God. This is what light stands for in general, — the process of transmission; it transmits the quality of the external world to our eye. It is not, however, the only transmitting agent. Transmission is a common function in nature; it is the ordinary method of coördination between our organs and external facts. The atmosphere, for instance, transmits light. In a London fog one can hardly see across the

street; but let a fresh breeze sweep in, and he can see the dome of St. Paul's looming overhead.

Revelation is often the coming in of a better transmissive element or substance. A convex lens so transmits light as to assist the imperfect eye. A pair of spectacles redeems a man's youthful vision. We have constructed the microscope, and lo, the bacteria are with us; they were not the creation of our brain, though the microscope was. So, too, with the telescope; man has not made the stars larger; he has simply found a better transmitting agent. So God has grown greater because man's soul is the object-glass, and under God's hand it has gradually gotten into better shape. Sometimes the oculist furnishes for us a temporary lens just to develop vision; as soon as the organ is perfect the lens is taken away. This must always be the case with a true revelatory process. It is adapted to the development of the organ. When the perfect organ is developed the imperfect method of refraction is done away. Knowledge then becomes direct. At first "one sees through a glass darkly,"

afterward "face to face." Now we are surrounded by transmitting agencies, and if there be a God, they are surely in his hands. There are, in fact, transmitting agencies for every organ, — the light for the eye, atmosphere for the ear and nose, water for the palate, and subtler elements still for subtler organs. In fact, all elements and substances are transmissive. Iron transmits heat; copper, electricity. Often, indeed, one *element* transmits another, as the air, the light. To sum it up, the so-called realities of life are transmitted, not demonstrated.

Now Christ's position was this, — he maintained that this process of transmission extends into the spiritual world. Matter transmits mind; material energy transmits personal energy. It certainly was true in his case. One can but be struck with the divine magnetism of that man; surely his spiritual forces radiated through his physical energies; his body was like a harp of God. The light that played about his face was a medium for the light that played about his soul; the vibrations of the external air transmitted with thrilling

power the vibrations of his spirit. All these external elements were good conductors of the spiritual forces that dwelt within his bosom; and this may be said to be true in general. Not more surely does copper wire conduct electricity than do the forces of the body conduct those of the mind. A shock of personality is as distinct as that of galvanism; the sunshine of a great heart penetrates outward as surely as the sunshine of June. In general it may be said that matter is a perfectly natural medium for the transmission of life; the two have constitutional correlations. Doubtless this has led to the materialistic view of life. Life is, in one aspect, a material force, penetrating matter, organizing it, and radiating through it. Everywhere in nature matter appears as the medium of life. A kernel of corn transmits the life force, just as Jesus described, so as to lay hold of the earth and produce in it a chemical change. Yet so entirely does the transmitting process extend into the realm of invisible life that all animal reproduction is accomplished by the invisible life force of sexual love. Without this

invisible psychic energy of passion there would be no animal forms. But this is not all the fact; the material world is not only a medium for the spiritual, but it actually represents it, for it corresponds to it throughout.

To return, for instance, to the element of light; it is not only a good conductor of spiritual force, but it furnishes us with a type of it, for there is a resemblance between the two. The sunshine of heaven is like that of a human spirit. The soul that experiences both finds a likeness between them. So, too, with cool water and spiritual comfort; wide apart as are the material and spiritual, the soul that tests them both finds a similarity. So it is with height and depth, or physical exaltation and depression; they are in experience like their spiritual counterparts. The body is a wondrous symbol of the soul; its uprightness of posture resembles and gives name to the uprightness of life. The strength of Christ's supporting arm, when it laid hold of Peter, resembled his supporting love. The warmth of his hand was like the warmth of his heart. His face imaged

the soul within. Thus the physical is, so far as we know it, a reproduction of the spiritual, not only as regards force, but also idea, for there is neither height, nor depth, nor sky, nor cloud, nor mountain-top, nor barren waste, nor coal of fire, nor scorpion's sting, nor poison dart, nor gold, nor pearl, nor precious stone, nor pit of darkness, nor any new discovery of force, nor gunpowder, nor dynamite, nor electric motor, that has not its resemblance in the world of spirit and the soul of man.

We have just as good ground for believing in the universal correspondence of matter to life, as we have for accepting the uniformity of nature or the correlation of forces.

It is no fancy, no mere theory; it is the experience of a man's own life that testifies to the parallelism, and so cries out of experience, "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child," or how "The quality of mercy is not strained, but droppeth as the gentle dew from heaven." So far as human experience goes every visible object is the type of some invisible reality; not only is it a type, but

also it is a prophecy and a promise, for the two are parts of one whole, and that whole is in process of development; first that which is physical; afterward that which is spiritual. Indeed, this correspondence between the visible and invisible is the foundation both of poetry and prophecy; for while, on the one hand, the universe is a series of mechanical facts, to be treated in a mechanical way, it is to the higher sensibility a language of God, being no less than a vast series of intelligible symbols, ever speaking to the ear of man, ever prophesying to him concerning the invisible realities by which he is surrounded. Each humblest thing tells of its unseen likeness: —

> "Not a natural flower can grow on earth
> Without a flower upon the spiritual side
> Substantial, archetypal."

Thus a child does not know the mother-life by logical proof; the mother-look suggests the mother's heart; such suggestion is not only soul-transference, but thought-transference.

And this leads us to a fact that lies at the bottom of revelation. Revelation is

not transmission alone, but personal radiation. In this respect, also, Christ's term holds good. Light not only transmits, but it radiates. It is, in fact, a type of *all* radiation; having first radiated, it becomes then transmissive, and this same characteristic belongs to persons. Personal life radiates; there is such a thing as a radiant life, in the fullest sense of the word. Moreover, it is a peculiarity of personal life that its radiation is largely determined by character and will. This differentiates the field of revelation widely from the field of science; the revealing personality is not passive like a stone or a plant, nor are its depths approachable at the will of the observer.

No matter what the transmitting agencies, a great personality does not radiate its innermost life save by its own will and activity; therefore, whatever our instrumentality for investigation, we stand helpless before such a personality. Voluntary radiation is the foundation factor in the process. The New Testament may be a perfect transmitting agency, but it is not every one who can find GOD in it, — nay,

but he to whom God wills to disclose himself. Revelation is a personal matter between a man and his Maker; the child does not first seek the father, but the father the child. When the child begins to seek, the father's method is already provided for him, nor is the method arbitrary, but based on personal laws. There are personal laws even between man and man whose violation shuts up reciprocity, and makes the radiation of one's inner self not only unfit, but impossible. Christ could not disclose his heart to the people of Nazareth; he could only disclose himself to those who were willing to conform to the truth. The Pharisees shut him up to himself. He that willeth to do a son's part in the reciprocity shall know of the Fatherhood. But the will must meet the practical test of identifying itself with the outward embodiment. "He that followeth me, said Jesus, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." It is by radiation, in an ever onward movement, that a life makes itself felt; for those who accompany it. Having been radiated, it then becomes transmissive and interpretative; it is a

luminous personal atmosphere. The man who follows the radiant life of Christ is pervaded by it; he sees the whole universe differently; he is enveloped by clearer air.

We are always surrounded by lives. Their personal atmosphere varies in its transmissive power. Sometimes it is luminous; sometimes obscure. There is the life of the community, the nation, the race; these all constitute atmospheres. In our egotism, we think our views are due to our own insight or reason. Little do we realize to how vast an extent they are distorted or clarified by the transmissive effect of other minds, other imaginations, other lives. The atmosphere of savagery shuts in the savage. The atmosphere of dogmatic thought shuts in the zealot. The light of science is the atmospheric effect of a few strong intellectual lives such as Spencer and Huxley. Sometimes it transmits; sometimes it obscures. Lives full of unholy egotism are radiated about us; they come between us and the New Testament; they are shadowy as the fog. There is in them no purified sensibility, no child-like intuition of God. The radiation of a

pure spiritual life is like the coming in of a fresh sunlit breeze. A personality in which self is, however unconsciously, the supreme object invariably casts a heavy shadow. Egoism always shuts out God. Such is the world's life that surrounds us, transmitting the sunlight of God through mists and vapors. This false transmissiveness distorts the glory of God, as it does the goodness of man. Man has but one way to overcome it; he must live it down. This is also God's way; this was what Christ did. He lived in the world until he had radiated the pure life of God, so that he was able to say to his disciples, "Be of good cheer. I have overcome the world." Revelation therefore involves struggle, — the warfare of personal light with personal darkness. The spiritual personality is positively antagonistic to the unspiritual, for it discloses its lack; it illumines the path of duty and development; it reveals the cross of self-sacrifice.

Thus revelation is inseparable from the radiation of God's personal quality. This makes it unpleasant to any one who does not wish to be made better, for it troubles

the conscience. Jesus called it a judgment. "This is the judgment, that light is come into the world, and men have loved darkness rather than light." From the standpoint of Christ this must necessarily be the case, for divine revelation is not a communication brought from an unnatural world; it is a direct radiation from the heart of that God who lives among us, whom all our acts concern. That such a radiation should be not only painfully illuminative, but an absolute shock to our immorality and egoism, might naturally be expected. When St. John summed up his experience of Christ's disclosure, he said, "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." The radiation of such a life, without a shadow of egoism, did indeed call forth from the world a cry of rage and hatred. It has never been pleasant to the selfishness of man, and can only be endured by one who is willing to be chastened by it. To put it squarely, a divine revelation can be seen only by one who permits it to be felt; it must work its way by finding the highest sensibility in every man, and overcoming the antagonism of his lower feel-

ings, till the heart becomes an organ of insight; but unless the man's will coöperates, there can be no light of life for him, nor will he ever find a satisfactory proof of God's existence. God does not prove himself. God lives.

CHAPTER X.

EVIDENCE.

It may be objected that the foregoing discussion does not answer the question, "What is Perception?" But surely a statement of the laws, involving as it does the method and practical characteristics, comes about as near knowledge as we can get, with our present faculties. Clearly it is the only knowledge we possess of either matter or spirit. Obviously the characteristic thing in Christ's view of perception is, that feeling is made coördinate with reason as a source and criterion of knowledge, instead of being placed on an inferior level. It is the life that knows, and the knowledge is acquired and possessed by the sensibility, acting coördinately with the reason, which latter power simply gives the relation of things. One can but be struck with the approximation of our modern naturalism to this view of Jesus. As

our observation of nature becomes closer, we have left behind us the old metaphysical notion that there is a separate knowing power to which the feelings report, and that when knowledge has once been seized by this intellectual organism, we then first possess it. It is true, we have not yet recovered practically from the effect which this view has produced upon our imagination. To the popular mind, feeling still stands discredited, and the notion still prevails that in the reason we possess the only certain and ultimate source of knowledge. It is only by degrees, through books like those of Mr. Kidd and Mr. Balfour, that the waves of this sounder modern philosophy begin to reach us, and people begin to realize that feeling is, equally with reason, a criterion; nay, more, since reason cannot of itself make us acquainted with any actual fact or quality, not even any fact or quality of our own selves, that there must therefore be in all our knowledge what is called an overtone of feeling. In short, the whole trend of naturalistic thought is toward this law of Christ. It is really bringing out

the necessity for the purification and development of feeling as one of the essential criteria of knowledge.

I have applied the word "reason" to animals as well as men. This is quite out of accord with the older view, but it agrees with the evolutionary conception. According to this, reason is but the larger and higher development of the power by which the robin discerns the relation between the cherry and his own stomach, and the whole evolution of the power, both in the brute and in man, is due to the same causation, — the pressure of environment and the struggle for survival. So far as I can see, the evolution of the power in man introduces no new element; it is still simply the power to discern relations. Out of this we get what we call "unities," or wholes and parts; from this in turn we derive analysis and synthesis. By this also we see that certain things constantly stand together in the relation of sequence. Thus we get the idea of uniformity and causality. As sensibility in man has developed in complexity and quality, the perception of relations has also become complex.

Necessitous situations have demanded the keenest exercise of the sensibility and a continuous application of it to new cases. Thus reason has given us what we call "principles of action." Especially has the struggle for existence forced us in the two directions previously mentioned, namely, to trust our feeelings and to discipline them by a sharper coördination with reason. This latter process we call "proof." Proof consists in determining whether things stand together in those relations which we have observed to be uniform. The uniform relation in which things stand together, we call "rational." Things thus standing together constitute rational unities; if an object of perception stands together with other objects in such a rational unity, our sensibility is corroborated, or, in other words, the fact is proved; but if we should see the form of a friend poised in mid air, without any support, we should judge it an irrational vision, because it did not stand together with the other facts of nature in that uniform relation which we have observed. It is just at this point, however, that we find the

limitation of reason. Confined strictly to the department of relations, it is unerring; but it is always dependent on the sensibility for its facts, and facts are essential to our knowledge of uniformity. It is impossible, for instance, to know absolutely all the relations in which material objects may stand to one another, until we have actually observed by the sensibility all the facts and forces that govern matter.

A few centuries ago nothing could have been plainer than that iron must invariably sink in water. If iron was seen to float, it was fair to regard it as an irrational vision. But a larger use of sight and touch has shown us that enormous masses of iron can float; so that by gradual experience we have discerned a wider relation and a new law of specific gravity. Indeed, the progress of reason is always inevitably limited by the development of the sensibility. Its most assured verdicts must always be based on some previous development of the sensibility. This is particularly noticeable in what is called legal evidence; here we have what many regard as a purely logical chain of proof. No-

thing, however, can be farther from the fact; almost every link of reason is joined to a link of sensibility. Each witness testifies what he has seen, or, in other words, what his feelings have tested; the value of his perception depends in a large degree upon the fine development of his sensibility, and the credibility of every witness is dependent on his being known by personal acquaintances to be a man of truth, while this personal acquaintanceship, which is the ultimate foundation of all legal evidence, is more than anything else a matter of intuitive perception. There is no greater mistake than to suppose that legal evidence is the highest order of proof; it is really an inferior kind. Not infrequently in the case of a criminal trial, there is a person who knows beyond the shadow of a doubt the guilt or innocence of an accused party. There are in certain men qualities of character that preclude the commission of certain crimes. Such crimes for such men would be a logical impossibility; they do not stand together in a unity with that kind of character. Reason is just as positive in its verdict on

this point as it is on the question whether a normal human stomach could have a craving for filth. This is what we call internal evidence. Reason shows us the relation in which spiritual facts stand together; it discloses to us moral and spiritual unities, and this kind of evidence is, to those who possess it, the most convincing of all, for it is just as logical as any kind of evidence can be. The part that reason plays in it is quite as unimpeachable, and the discernment of spiritual facts themselves is accomplished through the conscience, which is, when properly trained, the most trustworthy sensibility we possess.

Most of us have a friend, whose name is sacred to us, because with our highest feelings we discern in him the noblest qualities. If such a man should be convicted by overwhelming evidence of degrading crime, we should still have a perfectly rational faith in his innocence, on the basis of this internal evidence. We should say, logically enough, that it required stronger evidence than a court of law could produce to overcome the inter-

nal evidence which we possessed; yet this would be comparatively unavailing in a judicial trial, because of its being based on our own insight. This is a thing that is not transferable. It is from lack of this untransferable element that legal evidence is notoriously imperfect, and, therefore, human justice is so often lame in its conclusions. Even a perfectly honest man would dread the chances of a trial for murder, so easy is it to manufacture false evidence, and so difficult to bring to bear the only kind of evidence that can establish certitude, namely, internal evidence. Really, the value of legal evidence does not lie in its superior certainty, but in the fact that, like filthy lucre, it passes with everybody, and is therefore the only common standard between man and man. The criterion for judgment between all sorts and conditions of men, most of them in a rudimentary state of development, must be something that can be appreciated by the lowest. It must, therefore, necessarily be winnowed from untransferable elements, even though they would give the highest degree of conviction. Thus the elements

rejected by legal evidence are often the strongest of all; they are untransferable, and can be possessed only by the development of perception.

Moreover, Jesus came for the express purpose of putting these verities within the reach of man. It was, therefore, strictly logical in him not to adapt his presentation of truth to the legal method, or to the scientific, which is based on the same principle, but to elicit the higher perception. For this reason, too, the supreme evidence of Christianity must always be internal, and, in justice to Christ, it is at this point that the discussion of Christian evidence should begin. It is unjust and unreasonable to start the discussion with the inquiry, Who wrote these Gospels? in what age? were they eye-witnesses? All this has its place, but it is the little end of the question. If, in the process of centuries, we could solve those points satisfactorily there would still remain the fundamental question, Do these Gospels present a divine character? As a matter of fact, this is what they do present. Thousands of human souls have

been so touched by these Gospels, particularly that of St. John, that the conscience has been brought into a marvelous and joyful vitality. The spiritual affections have been evolved from it, and the spiritualized soul, looking upon the New Testament, has then seen in Jesus Christ a life so majestic, so infinitely differentiated from all other lives, that it has been compelled to cry out, "My Lord and my God!" Not only that, but seeing clearly that these accounts of the sayings and doings of Jesus, miracles included, stand together in a perfect rational unity, constituting one spiritual character, perceiving also that this character stands together with the necessities of the human heart and the noblest type of life, that same soul has been driven logically to say, "Reason compels me to believe this story, miracles included, on the internal evidence. If the miracles are differentiated from the ordinary human experience, the life of Jesus is still more so. There is no other life like this, either in its facts or in its spiritual effects. It is the embodiment of the divine law. It is a supernatural organ, for it coördi-

nates my soul with God; the life and the miracles stand together. On internal evidence so overwhelming, based on such a harmonious and transcendent experience of life, I must in reason believe the Gospels, unless some overweighing internal evidence can be brought against them." This argument that a miracle is opposed to natural law is trifling. How does any one know what a natural law is? How can any man tell what are the ultimate relations of matter and spirit? Is it possible to make an induction that shall be exhaustive, till we have experienced all the facts of heaven and earth? The law may be, for aught I know, that matter and spirit are interpenetrable. Am I to take a kind of external evidence that has neither sure foundation nor clear philosophy underlying it, and accept it against an internal evidence, perfectly logical throughout, presented to me by this joyful spiritual perception to which the Gospels have brought me? A belief like this, founded on evidence in which the sense of relations is perfectly clear, and harmonizing with the development of life, surely, such

a belief should be called neither irrational nor ultra-rational. It is sane; it agrees with the logic of nature, with the law of social evolution, and there is just as large a preponderance of reason in it as there is in any belief that man exercises.

It is the weakness of most modern attacks on the Scripture and also of the "higher criticism," that it is too often absolutely destitute of this sense of spiritual values. Unable itself to perceive anything in the Scriptures to excite peculiar reverence, it cannot understand why others should have such a feeling. It is almost as imperceptive as were the Roman soldiers when they made sport of Jesus, nor can it perceive why such an action can pain any one. Oblivious of the whole realm of internal evidence, it has the utmost contempt for the reason of those who discern this side, and thus it comes to pass that there is a long-drawn-out and hopeless contest between two classes of people who have no common ground. The fact remains that in a very large class of minds the gospel still continues to elicit this sense of values, precisely as

Mendelssohn, or Beethoven, or Raphael elicits the sense of æsthetic values. For a person who has no sense of musical value to accuse an enthusiastic musician of unreason or disingenuousness is obviously absurd. Is it not equally so for a man with no sense of spiritual values to accuse him who has them of being unable to comprehend the laws of evidence? After all, the fundamental criterion in all such cases is the sensibility. Divinity, like beauty or majesty, is a quality, and must be discerned by the feelings.

CHAPTER XI.

THE LAW OF THE WORD.

THE clearest form of personal radiation is speech, but, as a matter of fact, all expressive action is a kind of language. Jesus included his deeds with his utterances in what he called "the gospel." In the parable of the sower he grouped them together under the head of a single vital force, which he called "the word of the kingdom."

The very choice of this term indicates the correspondence of God's revelation to man's. The law of man's word is the law of the divine word also. What is that law? What is the starting-point of revelation in man? Obviously it is a man's innermost self; here it is that he finds the subject-matter for revelation; here, too, originates the revealing purpose. This innermost self is also the highest in a man, the latest stage in his development; it is

in fact what we have elsewhere called "the spirit." As will be remembered, the word primarily signifies "a breath," and, indeed, the breath of heaven that vitalizes a man and inspires him is a good symbol of this highest and innermost self, invisible, subtle, yet charged with mightiest forces. It belongs to the supernatural. Its field of activity is the invisible; its general characteristic is a power to discern and set before itself a final end; it thus elects its own supreme good and shapes its life with reference to it. A life thus shaped, with definite reference to a final end, constitutes what we call "character." In fact, the spirit is the character forming part of us, and possesses all the faculties essential to this process: as, for instance, the conscience, by which the scale of valuation is formed; the moral affections, by which one enjoys the supreme blessedness; imagination, by which to construct an ideal; and moral sympathy, or power to understand that life to which it is akin. These are all essential to the complete formation of the spirit, but many of them are not present in the primal stages of spiritual development, and,

indeed, some of them never appear at all, for the spirit is really the DEVELOPED character; its powers are essentially moral, their complete development depends on the question whether the will operates in accordance with spiritual law. In other words, the spirit is self-developing. It may elect the natural end of spiritual life, and so under God's creative environment reach a complete stage of spiritual existence, the entrance into which will be, as Jesus called it, a new birth; or it may elect a simulation of the highest good (such a likeness of it, for instance, as is to be found in the material world, the outward image without the reality). By thus choosing a false and unspiritual end of life, it will develop into an abortive spirit, never attaining to the new birth or goal of its evolution.

A wicked spirit is one that has thus departed from the natural pathway of spiritual development. It may be powerful, but it is an abortion. On the other hand, an undeveloped spirit, that has not yet passed through what Jesus called the new birth, is in an embryonic stage. Too often the embryo is astray from the path of

development, and has degenerated from its normal type. (This is, in fact, the case generally with regard to the human spirit. This condition Jesus undertook to relieve; through him, through the environment of his kingdom, and through the Pentecostal radiation of his spirit, his disciples advanced beyond the degenerated and embryonic condition.) But this much is always true of the spirit, even when it is abnormal and astray: it is the transcendent self, it gives us a supersensuous field of activity and enjoyment, so that a man may, like Epictetus, retire into it and say to his slave-master, "You cannot hurt me, I am beyond your reach." This transcendent and spiritual self is, in fact, the citadel of the Stoics, it is the city of refuge to which the ascetic flies; he dares not leave his vitalities outside of it, but drives them within its gates, or slays them without its walls.

In the great revelators this transcendent nature has always been powerfully developed. They have thus stood head and shoulders above the clouds, have explored the realm of ideals and higher relation-

ships, and thus have had somewhat to tell us of that realm to which we are akin. But in Jesus alone do we discern the perfect spiritual nature; in him we see the spirit with its crowning, creative powers, a perfect organ of divinity, able to discern the divine spirit, face to face, even as all life feels the life to which it is akin.[1] Now, as has been said, the spirit is the source of revelation, for it is in that centre of personal consciousness that revelation begins. From that point the light of life is radiated. To that highest type of life all matter corresponds. Yet, at first sight, no two existences appear wider apart than spirit and matter. Indeed, to a vast number of thinkers, they have appeared not only foreign but absolutely hostile to one another; yet in the human life they are united, so that they can be thrilled by a common grief or joy. What then is the "eirenicon," the coördinating force that bridges the chasm between the two? Let us take a case. Demosthenes is thinking, at Athens; his

[1] Cor. xv. 45: The first man Adam developed into a living soul, the last Adam into a life-giving spirit. (Greek Test.) *Ἐγένετο εἰς* can be rendered into good English only by the phrase "developed into."

spirit is roused to excitement; it is, however, a purely spiritual force. But lo! he speaks, and the next moment the spiritual force is transmuted into a physical. It becomes a thunderous wave of sound, charged with spiritual electricity, its cadences vibrating with spiritual impulse. Speech, then, is the conversion of spiritual into physical force; a word is a materialized thought. This is the miracle continually wrought by life. It is not confined to the tongue. Every gesture, every play of the feature, every act is speech, — animation itself is the materialization of the intangible life. In short, this transmutation of the immaterial into the material is not accomplished by a single organ, but by the life which animates every organ; nay, an organ is a complex thing. It is life and matter conjoined; the life holding the matter together, resisting its natural tendencies, and organizing it for vital purposes.

But the life that thus constructs, vitalizes, and utilizes the organisms of the body is radically different in kind from the spirit. It is not only a lower centre of vitality, but an altogether variant form of personal

consciousness and activity. It is so closely associated with matter that it is impossible to draw the line between the two. In fact, it is itself a kind of physical force. Diametrically opposite to the spirit is its field of activity. The home of the spirit is the immaterial realm; the home of this organic vitality is, primarily, in the physical universe. It really is our immanent self, for it dwells in matter; at the outset its pleasures and pains are those derived from the material world. To that world it is exquisitely sensitive. It tests the qualities of the material realm; its sensibilities are emotional, they are centred in the organisms, and are inseparable from the agitations of the nerve ganglia. Its will is dynamic, acting directly on the muscles through the nervous system, and so producing mechanical force. It appears, then, that the human personality unites in itself, under one consciousness, two distinct centres or foci of personal life and sensibility. I say "personal," because concerning each of them a man may use the word "I." When the Stoic has withdrawn himself by the abstracting power of will into his

own spirit, he may, like Epictetus, say to his tormentor, "I am beyond your reach." If he does not thus abstract himself, he is sometimes obliged to cry out piteously to his tormentor, "You are hurting me." Sometimes the natural antagonism between these two centres of consciousness assumes the form of a savage battle, — the flesh against the spirit, the spirit against the flesh; and the consciousness of a double personality becomes painfully realistic. It is the lower centre of vitality which is the first to be developed. It is, in fact, identical with the Psyche — Anima, or Soul. The man in whom this centre of vitality predominates is called, by St. Paul, the psychical or animal man,[1] even though he may possess strong intellectual and spiritual elements. Indeed, this centre of consciousness is fairly identified in the Scripture also, with the Psyche, or Soul; but it is preëminently the word-self, or logos, for by it the spirit is expressed. It is this revealing self whose

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 14: The psychical man receives not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot know them because they demand spiritual judgment.

development marks what we call the artistic temperament. True, the creative power of the artist comes from the ideal and spiritual realm, but that subtlety and precision of touch, together with the exquisite fineness of sensuous perception that characterizes the best artistic work, come from an exceedingly sensitive animal organization. The artist is seldom a Stoic; he cannot say to the harassing, tempting world, "I am beyond your reach." To him it is given rather to interpret the tragedies of life, for the Psyche is not only the revealing but the sympathetic or receptive self. It is the avenue through which we know outside facts and other lives. It is, therefore, in a peculiar sense the organ of humanity, for though nothing can be more heartless than this animal personality when it is taken up with itself, yet if it be employed as an organ of the spiritual love it becomes a wondrous medium of sympathetic force.

To take an instance: Jesus is being nailed to the cross by the brutal soldiery. As they drive the nails through his hands the immanent life is thrilled with pain, but

this same immanent life had been trained by him, not after the fashion of the Stoics to retire within the spirit, but to become the absorbed organ of a spiritual affection; it was therefore instinct with fatherhood; it had become more sensitive to the pains of others than to its own; it conveyed to him therefore, with vivid touches, the sunken condition of the soldiery, and from his innermost spirit there came the cry, "Father, forgive them." It was surely a feeble physical force into which the spirit of Jesus was transmuted; the cry of an agonized man, rising half distinguished in the roar of the mob, but through that feeble materialization there radiated another kind of force that we call "spiritual influence." Among the energies of the world it appears weak, but it is in reality supreme. Slowly but surely everything gives way before it. What is it? All we know is, that it is the radiated spiritual life. It is undoubtedly an emanation, it has the higher elements of the spirit, but it carries also with it the passional vehemence and the sympathetic touch of the psychic personality. The most ethereal and the most human

elements of Christ's nature were united in that cry; they hover about those words spoken from the cross, an eternal magnetic projection of the man's life. Not inappropriately, therefore, we often call a man's influence his "spirit," for his very personality is somehow present in it, — it is a projection of himself. Jesus called it sometimes "light," sometimes "living water;" but more specifically he styled it "the Spirit" and the "Holy Spirit." This, however, was particularly when he wished to make clear the divinity of the influence, which was none the less his, because he traced it back to God. This spirit that emanated from Christ appeared in its after operation to be detached from him, but in the case of God it surely cannot be detached from Him, for He is omnipresent. The Spirit of God, or Holy Spirit, must therefore be a third centre of divine personal consciousness, the life of God radiated, yet not detached.

The radiated human personality always converges or focuses itself about the man's embodiment. As that embodiment passes into history, and as the man's various

deeds and works are grouped together so as to form one concept with the name of the man himself, then the radiated life naturally focuses itself about the name; it becomes the power of the name. As it touches men's hearts they rally round it, identify themselves with it, are penetrated by it, and it thus becomes a corporate power, organizing men into one body. Being detached from local and temporary circumstances it takes on a flexibility that a man's formal life cannot possess; the formal literal life of a man cannot be followed in a different age and under varying circumstances. To attempt it would be absurd, but one may follow the *spirit* of a hero, though all one's circumstances be different from his.

The principles on which he acted have still their application, though a thousand years have passed. His lofty devotion has still its impelling force; his unflinching purpose retains its moving energy. Thus the spirit of a departed hero becomes an eternal power to lay hold of and stir the souls of men; our hope is in yielding to such impulses, not rashly but thoughtfully;

working out their application, and thus permitting them to carry us to a rational and practical goal. It may be said, in general, that the higher impulses to life come from spiritual sources. They are impulses given by radiated lives; their force is as invisible as the ether, and as incalculable. Now, the success of any great revelator must depend on his power to generate this kind of *post-mortem* vitality, and the power to generate it depends not only on the magnitude of both spirit and Psyche, but on the strict subordination of the Psyche to the spirit. True, one may not think this out in philosophic terms, but he cannot fail to distinguish in some loose and general way the function of the psychic nature, and its relation both to his higher self and to his influence. This is, in fact, the so-called law of sacrifice, which Jesus illustrated in so many ways. It is the bearing of the cross, the losing of the life. Indeed, a powerful personality, setting itself to the highest spiritual ends, cannot escape these facts. The violent struggle between these two different centres of vitality must disclose their existence and relationship.

In Jesus, it is evident that the psychic element was mightily developed, and passional, though pure. The struggle by which he obtained the mastery and subdued the flesh to his high purpose was awful. The disciples who witnessed it were appalled. They tell us that his sweat was, as it were, drops of blood. He, above all men, sought to leave behind him, for the help of humanity, a name and the power of a name. He knew that his earthly existence must end in obloquy; it was the necessary result of that great revelatory law to which he adhered so unflinchingly; therefore his hopes were wholly posthumous. It was this projected personality through which he expected to save mankind. It was the Father's spirit, radiated through his death even more than through his life, which would organize men into a new kingdom. This was his legacy, the Testament in his blood, which he trusted the Father would take care of as the property of the race, and utilize as a factor in his divine government, — nay, rather as the *central organism* of that government, "the sceptre of David." Now it was impossible

that so great a soul, so clear a mind, should not have searched to the very depth of those relationships on which the law of revelation depends, for it was his maxim to count all the costs. Spiritually his consciousness brought him face to face with God. In that clear vision all spiritual principles must have stood forth.

We must remember that Jesus was severely critical, penetrating and sifting the religious ideas of his age, rejecting vehemently some of those most firmly established, accepting others where one would least have expected it. He was also powerfully constructive, building upon ultimate causation, bringing disclosures out of the heart of nature and of God. From boyhood, too, he had been characterized by his intense application to the original Scriptures. What, then, did nature and the Scriptures report to him? Evidently this fundamental truth, that man was the image of God. In fact, man's correspondence to God was, as has been seen, the basis of his moral system. But in the first chapter of Genesis, which bears every appearance of being a vision, spiritual processes being there

described under visual terms, he read the story of what we call spontaneous generation; how God said, "Let the earth bring forth, and it brought forth." This is human terminology; it carries the correspondence between God and man into the field of creation. We know what man's speech is. It is a miracle, a creative power, transmuting spiritual into material force. What, then, is the creative speech of God that coördinated his transcendent spirit with the forces of material development? What was this word of God that not only created or developed and animated, but revealed? What was this spirit of God that moved upon the face of the waters? Why should such language be used, if not to show that the operation of God's word and spirit corresponded to that of man's? Such surely would be the inquiry of so vast and original and naturalistic a mind.

Furthermore, the Old Testament was flooded with this idea. It was this word of the Lord that caused nature to put forth her powers continually; it upheld the heavens; it caused the hinds to calve; it came to a man at the sound of a harp,—

threw him into trances and ecstasies. It wrought strange powers that exhibited its indwelling capacity and unison with matter. This it was that thrilled the armies of Israel; that strung the nerves of Samson, and drew forth the passional worship of David; that broke out in superhuman pathos for the sufferings of Israel, — this divine centre of superhuman feeling; this throbbing heart of God, vibrating with sympathy for the sensuous world, pitiful toward the orphan and the widow, caring even for the dumb beast and the birds of the air, and hearing the young ravens when they cry. How manifest it is in the Old Testament, — this psychic disclosure of God; this divine nature, clearly not the highest, not the transcendent spirit by which he inhabited eternity, but that which said, "When thou walkest through the waters I will be with thee, and when thou passest through the fire thou shalt not be burned;" this immanent life of God. It had, indeed, disappeared from theology before the time of Jesus.

To the Scribes and Pharisees God had become the transcendent one, the absentee

Lord, the anti-natural deity, resident far above the clouds; but, with the coming of Jesus, God became once more immanent. Again he was the life of nature; again his word animated and controlled it. "The living Father hath *life*" — meaning physical life — was the testimony of Jesus, and to it nature bore solemn witness at the grave of Lazarus. "He dwelleth in me," said Jesus. "He hath given to the Son to have life in himself." All through the pages of the New Testament we see that Jesus made the impression upon the disciples that he was the man of *the word*, and that the word was God's almighty physical force. If he did not really work miracles, he certainly made the impression of doing so. Matthew, Mark, and Luke carry us into an exceptional realm of experience; so exceptional is it that it is argued to be false. But what if Jesus was, as his very claim and intellectual position implied, a complete organ of The Word; what if God's word be, like man's word, psychic, — then the whole meaning of things becomes clear. Well might God disclose himself in Galilee as never before or since, because

in Galilee developed the preëminent man of the word, whose soul rested upon God's soul, whose exceptional physical life was given up to the radiation of God's spirit and to the humanization of God's name.

Organs always cause stupendous exceptions in nature; they create all the difference between the desert and the garden. When a new organ comes, then come new manifestations of force, and they are confined to the radius of the organ. As we read the gospels we are awestruck at the decisive manner in which this last fact appears. Where Christ, the organ, was received, there loomed up the supernatural glories of the word. Outside that radius there lay no supernatural help. In fact, Jesus made himself, as no other being ever did, both the interpreter and the vehicle of God's physical life; yet all this disclosure of God's immanent and psychic force he sternly subordinated to the revelation of God's spirit. It is the Father's spiritual traits more than the psychic that characterize Him. God *has* a soul, but He *is* a spirit, even as He has wrath, but He *is* love. Those only know a person who

know His supreme characteristic. Those only worship God who find Him in his transcendent life. That is the source of his Fatherhood; thence radiates his infinite spiritual affection, his unselfish purpose, his divine humility (which ever hides his power), and his great creative ideal for his children. Here, too, is to be found the key to all his acts. "God is a spirit," said Jesus, "and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Only the genuine adoration that comes from spiritual perception is worship, in truth.

It is impossible truly to know, or wholly to give one's self up to Him, till a man's own spirit is sufficiently developed to discern this transcendent Fatherhood. But even as the babe in its mother's arms catches the mother's spirit through the mother life that holds and cares for it, so must men learn to feel the transcendent love of God through the sympathizing and encircling soul of God; and as man's spiritual perception can only be developed through moral activity, he must begin by following the Holy Spirit or radiated life of God, as it

comes through some great embodiment of Him, and as it is focalized about the name of God's great reproduction of Himself, — the Son of the Father. This had been the principle of spiritual progress; it had been an invisible law, working more and more to the surface in the history of Israel. The failure of a Jewish leader like Nicodemus to recognize it as a plain earthly experience had surprised Jesus. It seemed difficult for him to teach a man with such dull spiritual perception, regarding those more transcendent spiritual realities. If he did not feel the psychic relationship, how could he feel the spiritual? "If you believe not the earthly things relating to God, how can you believe if I tell you of the heavenly things?"

Naturally it was a great concern of Jesus that men should see this correspondence. This alone can bring God near to us. The proof of God's existence, united to the description of his character, may indeed awaken our conscience and dominate our conduct, but such an external and legal pressure must always be weak, because it does not appeal to the flesh or immanent

life. The exuberant passional psychic vitality will remain inwardly and fiercely rebellious. It is with the psychic or natural man as with the child. The child frets at the father's will, because it cannot see the value of so transcendent a good. It feels only the antagonism of the father's ideal to its own animal desires. It is won over to an obedient trust only when it sees the father's will thrown into the strong light of the father's psychic affection; then it feels that the will must be love: so, in order to reconcile us to the will of God, Jesus sought to manifest Him in the flesh or immanent life. Thus doing, he disclosed to us how completely God's nature touches ours at all points. As in the parable of the Prodigal Son, he threw the warm sunshine of God's psychic relationship upon his moral relationship to us, and so gave God's spiritual call the vibrant passional note of God's natural fatherhood. Moreover, knowing that spiritual truth is apprehended through spiritual development and moral activity, he sought to put us at once on the track of possession by identifying every potency of faith with those

divine points of correspondence. He not only directed his disciples to identify men with himself personally and by name, but in the beautiful symbol of purification called baptism, they were to identify men, also, with the Father and with the Holy Ghost, or with the radiated life of God, which centres about the name of the Son.

Baptism is a symbol both of purification and of identification, and if this baptism of Jesus be followed up by action in any degree corresponding to the symbol, it does unquestionably result in a baptismal regeneration, a joyous culminating experience of God's transcendent Fatherhood, of God's immanent and sympathetic life, and of his Holy Spirit recreating our own souls, and lifting them heavenward by mightiest influences. Thus we see that, to the mind of Jesus, the Revelation of God was the progressive matrix of the soul, or life in its development toward moral and spiritual reciprocity with God. Detached from that matrix, there could be to the soul no true moral vitality.

CHAPTER XII.

REVELATION.

If we put the teachings and acts of Jesus together, his idea of a revelation becomes clear. Any material fact was to him a revelation, provided it was coördinated with spiritual life, for it then became a medium for radiating and suggesting the spirit. Thus, the little child whom he took in his arms, and the bread he blessed, became revelations.

Indeed, to the mind of Jesus the whole universe was constructed on a revelatory principle; its development was a revelation. "There is nothing hidden," he taught, "that shall not be revealed." The simplest things in nature corresponded to the word, — became its analogies, types, and prophecies. So, too, the smallest things were significant of God's character. All that was needed was spiritual perception. He himself saw God's tender care in the

clothing of the lilies and in the feeding of the birds. He saw God's presence and grace in those atmospheric coördinations that bring rain and sunshine upon the evil and the good; while in the events of his own life, such as his enforced departure from his ancestral home, his peasant's lot, his despised Galilean breeding, his rejection and crucifixion, he saw again the distinct utterance and coherent development of the word. Every feature of his life, even the anointing of his feet by a woman whose presence was considered vile, was a gospel of God. He offered no evidence of this, but he trained his disciples to see it; and the final illumination of their souls, transforming them into prophets and poets, certainly proved the value of his method and the soundness of his view.

It is actually after this fashion that men do ever obtain the realization of God. Nature, doubtless, contains the elements of proof, and to a complete perception things stand together in that rational unity which is *itself* the best proof of the soundness of our vision. Indeed, the best proof is *always* the normal increase and

widening out of the vision itself, and this is a revelatory process. To this nature is adapted; for we find her ever deepening and widening, ever becoming more spiritual and more rational to the view of the disciplined soul. To the eye of Christ, no fact failed to be significant of God. However the fact *originated*, in whatever line of causation the movement began, it had an ultimate coördination with God that made it revelatory. "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings? Yet not one of them can fall to the ground without your Father." Jesus nowhere claimed that nature proved God, in our present stage of development. Neither was nature identical with God, but its facts were so correspondent to Him and so coördinated with Him as to suggest Him, psychically, rationally, and spiritually. The dome of St. Peter's expresses the soul of Michael Angelo; so does the dome of the sky express the soul of its Creator. "The heavens declare the glory of God." It is an utterance rather than an argument; "their harp string (by its vibrant note) has gone out through all the earth," says the

Psalmist. The invisible things of Him are plainly seen, says St. Paul, being *perceived* by the things that are made. Not only so, but, as was said a moment ago, the movement is toward larger, completer coördination, toward the more perfect mediumship and spiritualization of matter. Nor is this movement confined to the visible agencies about us; it takes in the whole universe of the Logos. This explains what otherwise appears inexplicable. When Jesus was asked on oath, by the High Priest, if he were the Christ, he replied that he was, and he added, "Hereafter thou shalt see the Son of man sitting in the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven." At first glance these words seem to indicate a startling departure from the ordinary sane and practical naturalism of Jesus. Besides, there is an apparent absurdity in the very statement. He clings to his term, Son of man, which stands for his entirely naturalistic view of the messiahship, and yet couples it with the most anti-natural kind of supernaturalism. But a careful study of his previously uttered words to his disciples

shows that this coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven was to his mind a perfectly natural development; in fact, it stood together with his BEING the Son of man, or, in other words, the final type and stem of humanity.

There is in the kingdom of nature such a coördination of different systems that they all meet in certain climacterics. When the ground is soft and ready for the seed, then from the upper world of the tree-top there drops an acorn. When in the springtime the buds are properly developed for it, there comes up from the distant south a warm wave of air, and in a few hours nature is transformed. In the harvest time, when the grain has silently and imperceptibly reached its organic completion, out from that higher realm of manhood come the reapers, and in a day the field is harvested. Thus do the different worlds and systems move together in unseen correlation, while in organic crises their coördination is developed with overwhelming power. This is the gist of many of Christ's parables concerning the God-realm. Nature imperceptibly moves with

the organisms of the spiritual kingdom, he taught, until the natural shall become supernaturalized, and nature shall break forth in one vast theophany. The suddenness of this final coördination he often dwelt upon. "Behold," said he, "the fig-tree and all the trees, when they now shoot forth, ye see it and know of your own selves that the summer is nigh." So Jesus declared it was to be with the God-realm; it, too, was to have its grand climacteric, its sudden issuance into summer tide, its quick precipitation of supernatural powers and glories, its sudden reckoning with unseen environment. Sudden, too, and unforeseen, save by those who walk in the light of the revelatory process, was to be the clothing of humanity's stem with the majesty of God. But for him who understands spiritual law and who reads the daily prophecy of the unfolding organs, there is a perfect genetic continuity, an unbroken chain of causation, such as underlies all of nature's surprises.

It is but natural that when the earth is ripe, heaven should descend upon her. It is but natural that the manifestation of the

Logos should suddenly take on the divine majesty and appear to be, what it really is in the grander sense, a coming down out of heaven, a descent from the highest field of causation. The first manifestation was a supernatural embryo, the babe Christ Jesus; the second must naturally be a spiritualized human form, the Son of man coming in the glory of the Father with the messengers of the word. Natural, also, is it that he shall usher in judgment, for it will be the great crisis both of evolution and of revelation. The cosmos is continually experiencing crises; these occur either at the birth or maturity of any organ, wherever there is a new, grand coördination to be made, as when the stem rises above ground, or the corn is ready for the sickle; there is a crisis and a revelation; that which is fitted for the new coördination then goes forward into a larger life; that which is not prepared is cast away. So, when at last this present cosmos, this system of life and death and decay, is ripe for the last great coördination with God, it it is but natural that there should be a World-Vision of the kingdom when Christ,

the stem, shall appear to all men; when the glory of the Father, which has been hid within him, shall break forth; when he, who is the natural organ of unity between heaven and earth shall stand visibly between the two. Coördination is never on one side alone; if earth has been preparing for heaven, so, too, has heaven for earth. It is but natural, therefore, that when earth's harvest is ripe, that Determinative Personality, which is back of all law, and all force, and all judgments, and all crises, and all revelations, should then appear, shining through nature like the sun in his strength, and above all glorifying him who is the Type of manhood and the Likeness of Deity. Nor shall Nature herself, transmissive though she be, find herself able to bear so great a glory. Nay, but there shall be "a great white throne, and one sitting on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven flee away." For evolution means not only consummation upward, but also the manifestation of that which is within, aye, and the descent also of the highest into the lowest; it means, moreover, a sudden final coördination, and

the disclosure and separation of all that is unfit to survive, and the manifestation of all causes and the secrets of all hearts, and the setting of all things in the light of life, which is the light of God. Thus, nature is not only in its structure and correspondence, but in its developments and issues, revelatory and prophetic, for the material corresponds to the psychic and the psychic to the spiritual, and the lower development of the organ is a prophecy of the higher development.

This, probably, was what Lord Bacon saw, when he declared that "prophecy had a springing and germinant fulfillment throughout all time," and this undoubtedly is the key to all sound prophetic interpretation, particularly of Christ's eschatological teachings. He is suddenly asked by his disciples when Jerusalem will be destroyed, and what shall be the sign of his coming and of the end of the world. It was a question concerning a fact of infinite complexity. His answer shows clearly a purpose not to convey to them, even if he knew it, the day or hour of the final climacteric, but to plant in their

minds the seeds of a larger idea, namely, how this process of spiritual evolution, revelation, and judgment, with himself as its stem, must repeat itself in every age and in every life, as well as in the larger cycle of the cosmos. So while he declares that "the times of the nations must first be fulfilled," thus clearly pointing out a vast diameter, he likewise adds, "*this generation* shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled," so indicating the narrower cycle of fulfillment with its diameter of a single human life, and its practical lesson, "Be ye also ready." Both cycles are unquestionably a fact; both assertions are true, though apparently contradictory, for each organism corresponds in development to the cosmic organism.

But while the universe is revelatory both as a whole and in its parts, it does not follow that any man, simply because he has a keen intellect, may pick out any section of it, and expect to find there a satisfactory revelation of God. As has been already seen, revelation is a complex thing; external facts have many correspondences. The question of what a thing reveals depends on

what it is actually coördinated with at the time, and also on the perceptive development. The short-sighted vision of Peter coördinated the cross with evil only, and shrank from it. Christ's vision traversed the great arc of God's providence, and saw in the cross His glory.

It is the *final fact* with which things are coördinated to our vision, that determines our revelation. It is this that empties the cosmos of God, or fills it with a divine radiance. It is so in our secular revelations. The laborer plods stolidly along after the plow; the warm earth opens up lovingly at his feet; the bluebird's note of praise falls on his ear; the breath of spring caresses him; all about him are revelations of nature's life, its gladsomeness, its hope, its benediction, but none of these revelations move him, for all these things are seen in the light of one sordid fact, the necessity of work. We are all much like that; in our dullness we fail to catch our revelations; in our sordidness we coördinate them with some uncomfortable, dark, or evil embodiment of life, and thus they are distorted or obscured. Did not God bring

into the world those poetic souls, who are not only the interpreters of nature, but the crowning embodiments of her sensitive life, and thus put us in touch with life, we should miss its nobler language altogether. Such souls, taken in unison with their life history, are the stems of the revelatory process, and it is in proportion as facts stand together with them, that the facts themselves become revelatory. Indeed, such men are themselves revelations *par eminence;* they are the final and definitive factor in the process, just as the object glass is with the telescope; and as we study the teachings of Jesus, we see that this was precisely his view of a divine revelation. Revelatory as nature was to him, earnestly as he taught his disciples to listen to its teachings, clearly as he traced the utterance of the word in daily events, it is perfectly evident that he always conceived of nature as standing over against the fact of the Hebrew Scriptures; he never thought of interpreting one without the aid of the other. Both belonged to God, but the Scriptures were the stem and norm of all revelations, the

specific embodiment of the divine spirit, the revelation *par eminence*, the final authority and type, with which all things were to be coördinated. To them he gave the most diligent study. They were his law of holiness, his support in temptation, his resource in agony. Obviously, too, he regarded himself as their outcome. He himself, with his gospel — that is, the facts of his life — was to constitute the crowning organism of revelation. The facts of the universe were revelations to men in proportion as they were coördinated with him. "No man knoweth the Father save the Son and He to whom the Son willeth to reveal him." This saying evidently made a deep impression. It is given both by Matthew and Luke, and must have formed a part of the earliest gospel.

And it is matter of fact that all the events of the gospel are luminous and suggestive of God, because of their coördination with the person of Jesus. Wrested from that coördination and associated with some evil object, those same facts become as dark and malignant as they did to the Pharisees. This surely corroborates

Christ's point, that revelation had its stem or interpretative organism, namely, first, the Law and the Prophets which were until John, and then the Christ, and that the revelatoriness of nature to us depends on its being coördinated with this interpretative organism. I have already said that this is true in secular things. Indeed, this fact of a central organism or stem in which the revelatory life is specialized both for an interpretative and a reproductive purpose extends into every department of the world's development. The universe certainly reveals beauty at every point, but there is everywhere the possibility of distortion through incongruous coördination, and we should never have been sufficiently rescued from such effects, or quickened into æsthetic vitality, if it had not been for such a specific organism of the beautiful as has been furnished us by the Greek race and by Greek skies. So, too, although common human nature unquestionably contains the elements both of law and civil liberty, yet this general revelation would not have been sufficient to reveal the idea of free government, had it not been for

such a series of selected and specially vitalized types as has been furnished to the race by the history of the Anglo-Saxon people.

We can therefore understand the significance of Christ's saying to the Samaritan woman, "You worship, you know not what. We know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews." The Samaritans had only the Pentateuch, and even this, cut off from the organism to which it belonged, was coördinated with a nucleus of half idolatrous institutions that destroyed whatever of clearness there was in it. Salvation was of the Jews, because our development in correspondence to God depends on our revelation of Him, and our revelation of Him depends on our being able to coördinate our vision with that which is the crowning organism of revelation. For this crowning organism must of course be not only interpretative, but creative of spiritual vision. It is not only the organism of light, but of life, since perception is a form of vitality. To come then to the Old Testament, we have by this position cleared away many of its difficulties. We have

found that it is not an anti-natural or ideal communication sent down from heaven. It is a part of nature, a section of nature's history, a series of types, persons, events selected from nature, and segregated into a specific organism by a process gradual and perfectly natural, yet at the same time supernatural. We have learned that its purpose is not to give us extra-natural facts, but to interpret natural facts, — that one great object is to illustrate the law by which man, the child of God, the supernatural embryo, develops in correspondence to God; but particularly we have learned that its purpose as regards God is to present Him, not in an infinite and transcendent apartness from nature, but in his relationship to it, and particularly in those limitations to which he is subjected by his living with his children in the same house. Thus the Law and the Prophets are really the law of the cosmos, as it is upbuilt by spiritual coördination with God.

The criticism, therefore, so constantly bestowed upon the Bible for the evils it reveals, must fall to the ground, or at least

it must give way to the question whether they are not the very things we are to expect, seeing it is not an ideal revelation of a perfect society, or of any complete statutes of a heavenly realm, but the disclosure of the process by which evil and falsehood and sin are overcome by gradual coördination with the divine word.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SPECIFIC ORGANISM OF REVELATION.

A GENERAL glance at the Old Testament confirms Christ's view, for it shows us that it is a genuine section of human history, following the ordinary laws of human development from the tribal period to the national, and from a climax of monarchical splendor, through various stages of decay, toward a new climax of spiritual vitality and glory.

The organism begins with an event common in history. Out from the midst of a great empire, in which literature, civilization, and religion have reached a high pitch, there come various Semitic migrations; one of these is the Hebrew. It enters Palestine, bringing with it, like the soil about the roots of a transplanted tree, some of the life, literature, traditions, and even the household gods of the old country from which it came. Yet the move-

ment has in it a distinctive and separative aim, imparted to it by the determined spirit of Abraham, its leader; it is a protest against the spiritual tyrannies and distortions of the day. It is more than that; it is a positive and vivid faith in the Almighty as a sovereign and friend. The distinct idea of a Transcendent God stamped upon Abraham's mind, borne in upon it from the starry universe to which he lifts up his eyes, is the organic force of Hebraism. Admitting large reciprocity with other peoples, it nevertheless lays inevitable bounds to such reciprocity. Like every great organic force, it tends to segregate into a fixed type. This it accomplishes by reproducing from time to time a great stem man, in whom this idea of the living Creator and Saviour is supreme. Thus, when the tribe, like any other small migration of that day, is obliged to fly for refuge from famine to the great empire of Egypt, and there naturally falls into bondage, there rises the preëminent stem of the organism, Moses, possessed of an Egyptian education, but intensely imbued with the Abrahamic idea of God. With Moses as its stem and head,

the creator of its literature and institutions, the Hebrew people are formed into a nation. Returning to Canaan, they carry with them many of the Egyptian ideas, much of its culture, and, it would appear, some of its institutions and ceremonies; but these are so winnowed and sanctified by the masterful spirituality of Moses that they may be said to be born anew, and to be fairly incorporated into the Hebrew type.

That is the human side of it; it is the coördination that strikes one as divine; but this coördination occurs in ordinary human affairs. An old optician is at work, repairing spectacles. His little grandchild is amusing herself by picking up the lenses, lying loose upon the table, and looking through them. She finds a curious effect from putting one in front of the other, and suddenly exclaims, "I can see the figures on the town clock yonder." That was the discovery of the telescope. Can any man who believes in God say that this coördination, upon which the whole structure of modern astronomy has risen, was made by those childish hands alone? Shall we not rather say that those hands were un-

consciously directed by the same power that leads the planets in their courses, and the lonely waterfowl through the wide sky? Unquestionably Moses believed that *his* hands were directed, and his thoughts suggested, by the living God, so that the framework of government which he established, notwithstanding its secular and Egyptian elements, was in its combination the law and revelation of Jehovah; and in fact it is characteristic of the Hebrew organism that the process is quite as natural as divine. We recognize it as the same cosmos with which we are familiar, but the coördinations are so salient, and the crowning facts so suggestive of God, that the whole thing appears to be transfigured into a supernatural history. This appears more fully if we consider its three great features, namely, Legality, Ceremonialism, and Miracles. First, its Legality: there was in the Mosaic plan of government neither religious nor secular liberty, no free play of moral or industrial forces. It was a hard and fast union of church and state. No man could choose his own object or form of worship. Neither could he initiate his

own generic mode of spiritual thought. That was already formed for him.

Every spiritual idea, relationship, or necessity, every coördination between the natural and supernatural, was expressed by an external law, and with the law was associated judgment and penalty. This was not due to any arbitrariness; it was the only way these ideas could be expressed at the outset, for the eye of man was as yet rudimentary; it could only perceive spiritual things in their external aspects, nor did it penetrate far into the form. The only environment, therefore, that could develop spiritual vision was a vast series of types. Through them the spiritual reality was dimly but increasingly transmitted. Thus the idea of divine power could only be disclosed under the symbol of physical force; spiritual authority must needs appear in the form of a Visible Head; God's sovereignty, as an absolute monarchy; spiritual law, as earthly statute. Again, the effect of obedience to spiritual law must be manifested under the type of earthly rewards, while those retroactive effects and *malcreations* that result from disobedience

to spiritual law, or indeed to organic law of any kind, must be represented by earthly penalties and curses. Furthermore, that living reciprocity between God and men, which is the foundation of Righteousness, must be conveyed by a house of God, in which God manifested himself formally, to which, also, men brought offerings, and from which they took away blessings. Indeed, the coördination of earthly with heavenly things must be shown throughout by a series of statutes and observances that connected every human interest with the temple. Not a child could be born, not a field cultivated, not a herd raised, not a disease incurred nor a recovery experienced, not a war undertaken, but its relation to the spiritual world must be expressed in some solemn rite, associating it with the house of God and the gate of heaven.

Thus the organic unity between God and man, between the spiritual and the secular worlds, necessarily assumed the form of a mechanical theocracy. In no other way could the conception of spiritual unity have been presented or enforced.

To our modern view, the whole theocratic notion is wrong and absurd; the use of temporal power in the spiritual realm is to us the worst of all tyrannies; insistence on a single type of religion is bigotry; the punishment of non-conformity is wicked persecution. All this is quite true at the present day, because the spiritual organs are in a very different stage of development. To force any mature organ into an environment adapted to infancy would be cruel indeed, but at the time the Hebrew revelation began, the method *was* adapted to the organ, for the organ *was* infantile. It was impossible to construct an interpretative environment in any other way. ALL the great religions were theocracies; ALL spiritual conceptions were formal; ALL unities were external; ALL notions of law legal. There is no greater distinction between the ancient world and our own than in this conception of law. Under the influence of Christianity and education, law, whether moral, religious, social, or industrial, has grown to appear what it really is, not an artificial decree, but the order of nature; law is natural law, it is the law of

our own organism; obedience brings a reward, because it harmonizes with the structure of things. For the same reason, disobedience involves perpetual misery. As St. Paul said, to the spiritualized and educated man no legal enactment is necessary, the law is written in his heart, he understands the principles and necessities of the spiritual organism, and may be trusted to apply them as he sees fit. If legal statutes exist in an enlightened spiritual community, they are reduced to the minimum necessary as an education to the weak and a restraint to those who are still gross and uneducated. But they have no place in the completed kingdom of God, the perfect human society. On the other hand, in ancient times the masses of the people had not the faintest conception of law as natural; they had no perception of the *organism*, national or spiritual, simply because they had as yet no eye for the spiritual forces that build up society, or of those underlying correlations that lie at the basis of all social unities. The modern citizen is, at least, a living cell of the national structure. The Hebrews were

mostly inorganic masses, in whom the cell-life had not yet been formed; hence legality was a necessity, and a theocracy is the natural evolution of legality. It was the only possible issue out of the situation. Even within our own century, religious leaders, such as Newman and Manning, have fled for defense against rationalism to a papal power and an external authority, because they felt they had no spiritual organism adequate to the control of the masses. Their feeling seems to most of us false, but *having* it there was for them no alternative.

Even at the present day, millions of our fellow Christians have so feeble a conception of spiritual law and of purely spiritual forces that they dare not attempt to get along without a formal unity and a mechanical theocracy; and if this is true when Christ is only hid, how much more was it true before Christ came. There was then no spiritualizing force like the gospel, whose potency might be brought out by a leader who understood it. As we read the history of Israel, we see plainly the tendencies to disintegration, and the

impossibility of maintaining any nucleus for a national revelation, or, indeed, any national unity at all, without the sternest constraint. Men needed to be held to an outward manifestation. The only notion of divine glory possible to them was that of a glittering effulgence; the only aspect of authority which prevailed with them in their ebullitions of animalism was that of terror. The only conception of law which they could appreciate was that of a statute enforced by rewards and penalties.

It is true that the nobler spirits were susceptible to the spiritual law of faith; but even in their case the element of temporal reward was a necessity, and as for the masses, their extreme animalism made it impossible for them to keep their eye patiently upon such a future hope. It was the *negative* side of law, the terrible "Thou shalt nots," which alone could lay hold upon them. Thus, by sheer necessity, even the Decalogue, that great law of love, based upon the divine goodness of Jehovah, must needs take the negative form which is characteristic of all legality; for legality is always the formal and rudi-

mentary presentation of law, while law is in itself natural, affirmative, and organic. Another feature of this rudimentary stage of revelation was the extreme preponderance of punishment as a revelatory force. Precisely as legal enactment must needs constitute the original revelation of organic law, and the negative side of the statute must necessarily be the prominent one, so for the same reason, in the primitive revelation, penalty must play the principal part. Thus, even in the original Mosaic covenant, that terrible "eye for an eye" code appears founded on the justice of God, and rightly, too, for justice is regard due to the organism. The animal sense that cannot be attracted by the beneficence of law, or steadily fixed upon the hope of reward, must be caught and riveted by some stern symbol of the law's necessity and of the curse that follows disobedience. This necessity underlies all forms and stages of government. It has been held by many that government and law are educative. This is in a certain sense profoundly true, but not exactly in the sense conceived; they are educative,

because they are revelatory, and their educative value depends upon their following the law of revelation. So long as they are the outward and comprehensible types of spiritual facts and laws, they do indeed educate man; when they are too far in advance of the age, when they cease to be transmissive of spiritual facts and forces, or when they distort those ideal realities, then they carry man backward rather than forward. In our own time, so great has been the spiritual revelation of Christ, that consciously or unconsciously we have come to depend upon IT in connection with education.

It is questionable whether any one thinks now of the educative or revelatory value of penalty. We conceive of it not as a symbol of the crime, or the injury done to law, but mainly as a protection to society. But this is a dangerous error. In the nature of things penalty must always possess the revelatory function, and in a primitive, an animalized, or a degenerated condition of things it must inevitably come to the front. Thus, it always looms up as a last judgment for a wicked society. It must be, as

it was in the Old Testament, the principal matrix for the development of the rudimentary moral nature, and, if the moral sense of the nation is degenerate, then its necessities must be considered rather than those of the individual criminal; better he should be turned into an awful symbol of law to touch the nation's conscience than that the nation itself should morally perish.

This same necessity for expressing spiritual conditions, under the form of prohibitory laws and suggestive penalties, is illustrated in another aspect of the primitive revelation. The class of things to be prohibited is vastly enlarged. This, also, corresponds to nature. In the primitive organism, prohibition, or, what is the same thing, protection, is at the maximum; the vitality of the organism is too low to admit of an extensive reciprocity. It can incorporate but a few facts. The babe can take only milk; meat would be violently injurious, not because it is intrinsically opposed to the human system, but because the babe is not able to subordinate it to the vital purposes of the organ-

ism. That which cannot be subordinated naturally becomes poisonous to the system; so it is with human society, and this irreversible law appears illustrated in the Old Testament revelation. The spiritual organism was in a low state of vitality. It was a babe, it could subordinate but a narrow range of facts, and that which could not be subordinated to its vital necessities must be treated as a poison, or, if it were personal, it must be treated as an enemy. If it assumed a volitional shape, then it was rebellion against spiritual law, and as such must be punished and destroyed. In a Christian nation, possessed of a strong spiritual vitality and a vivid perception of spiritual perils, there is no necessity for inflicting penalties upon an advocate of infidelity, upon a profane swearer, or upon a maker of graven images, not even though he should proceed to the length of worshiping them; the whole statuary of the Vatican gallery contains for our religion not one particle of danger. So, too, with witchcraft, necromancy, spiritualism, and other modern forms of dabbling with the occult; despite their evil tendencies,

both to soul and body, it is better that, so far as possible, they should be left to the operation of spiritual forces. It is in the interest of spirituality itself that it should be utilized to the utmost.

So, too, it would be absurd to object to social intercourse with any people, however degraded, except in the case of the young or the feeble-minded. The organism of an educated Christianity is quite capable of taking care of itself, and if developed, as it should be, may well be trusted to exercise the widest reciprocity and to subdue all things to itself. Not so with Hebraism. General Armstrong, who as an educator had made a profound practical study of the Indian, negro, and Polynesian under his tuition, prohibited dancing at Hampton Institute. In his terse phrase, it took a good deal of civilization to STAND dancing. It was not unitable with morality in the primitive or degenerate stages of moral development. So, in the Hebrew revelation, we find expressed in various forms this great spiritual law, that facts which cannot be subordinated to the spiritual organism are hostile to it.

To bring in an ununitable or an insubordinate element is a crime against God and the nation. Filth, personal uncleanness, traces of passional indulgence, foul diseases, all these could not be tolerated in the camp of God's people. They were not forbidden on sanitary grounds, as some have supposed (at least there is small evidence of such fine ideas of sanitation in that day); they were forbidden on spiritual grounds, because they were not unitable with the outward symbols of holiness, or with the anthropomorphic conception of God's presence. So, too, a complete military organization could not, to the primitive Israelitish mind, be harmonized with the conception of entire faith in God, any more than a large regular army is at present unitable with our republican liberty. It involves a perilous temptation. We are not yet strong enough for it. The same principle was occasionally applied with regard to the employment of a physician. There was no law against it, but the procedure seemed antagonistic to that perfect trust which, in the mind of the Israelitish leaders, was the absolute neces-

sity of soul and body. An external unity cannot tolerate great complexity. The same unwritten but formal necessity appears in the account of the taking of the census by David. We see in Joab's remonstrance against the decree his conviction that it was an evil thing. It could not be coördinated with the spiritual organism; it would strike a blow at faith; it would generate in the Israelites that animal pride which had so often, in Joab's experience, brought with it a curse. It was better to trust God for the increase. Human nature could not resist such a temptation; and Joab was right, superstitious though it would be at the present day to give ear to such considerations. There being then no science, the devil filled the vacuum. To take a census in David's time was to introduce among the people, not a useful, popular education, but a ground of pride, that could not be united with that faith which was the nation's vitality; nor could the natural sequence of such an act be revealed to him, or his people, in any other way than by a heavy affliction falling upon the people themselves, and so cut-

ting at the very root of this self-trust, while it pierced the king to the quick and threw a new light on kingly responsibility. To have taken *his* life would have been to cut the stem from the branches. This spontaneous legality, radiating as it does an eternal principle of spirituality, shows how flimsy is the argument that the law was non-Mosaic, and was foisted on the structure afterward. How much of the system Moses may have literally communicated is indeed uncertain and little to the point, for the whole thing is included in the Mosaic germ contained in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, and in the very conception of an interpretative organism. It is the legitimate development of the Sinaitic anthropomorphism; and that, including, of course, in its evolution all the relations between God and man, was the natural form for a primitive revelation to take, since it corresponded to the spiritual eye of the age. Besides, it was absolutely essential that the interpretative organism should correspond to the religious development around it. To do any good, it had to be a section of the history of the

time, a series of selected types belonging to the age.

In fact, the spiritual value of the Old Testament revelation lies in almost exactly the opposite direction from what has been supposed, — not in its pure separateness, but in its affinity for the religious and governmental forms about it. This makes it, indeed, an interpretation of that broader revelation presented by the development of history under God's hand. The isolation of the organism was only carried as far as was necessary for the sake of selection and purification; indeed, after its immersion in Egypt at the outset, the nation was planted in the very centre of the great empires and on their warpath, where it was forced into reciprocity. Its whole civilization was mainly an incorporation of outside elements, as in the case of the seed in the soil; nor were the elements which it brought from Mesopotamia eradicated; they continued a part of its structure. True, the grossest and most cruel forms were expurgated, but cruel forms still survived: polygamy lingered; so did that savage court of justice, the vendetta;

likewise the brutal system of maintaining the army by the spoils of the vanquished and the sack of towns.

These survivals of savagery would, of course, have been extirpated if the object had been a final manifestation of God's ideal, but in an interpretative organism their retention was of the utmost value, because it corresponded to national development universally. We see the savage forms in Israelitish history perishing, precisely as the spoils system is dying out with us at the present day, through the coördination of society with spiritual organisms. We see them at their *worst* mitigated by such coördinations, as in the case where the vendetta is associated with the city of refuge. But, above all, do we see a type of the way in which God universally utilizes evil by his employment of such savage forms for the purposes of his own spiritual government. To our more spiritualized mind it is shocking to see God represented as directing a barbarous raid, the sack of a town, the division of the spoil, or as sending upon his creatures a horrible leprosy, or a wicked spirit from the Lord. Un-

questionably this is a false effect, as false as that produced when a child puts on his grandfather's spectacles; the refraction is not suited to us. There is a vital ray of truth which it fails to focalize upon our retina. We have developed beyond that revelation. True, we see, or ought to see, that in some sense everything is coördinated with God; we see that the most cruel crimes, such as the crucifixion of Jesus, do come in some way from his ordering, so that the victim can say, "The cup that my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" But we also see that God's orderings are not mechanical, and that many of them express his will only by indirection. We see that the condition under which everything goes forward is that of liberty; that God's method of acting on men is psychic. It is the still, small voice of suggestion. His laws are the laws of our own structure; his penalties the retroactive effect of these laws. When, for example, men violate the law of that corporate organism, the nation, then the organism becomes the matrix of sin and misery. It brings forth misshapen person-

alities, distorted ideas, cruel institutions, plagues, and curses of humanity. It is a bottomless pit, this organism, out of which issue locusts and wild beasts. Thus a sinful human society carries in its womb a brutal civilization, and this evil progeny, caught up into the current of a divine providence, commanded by a divine will, and tempered by a divine mercy, constitutes God's punitive instrumentality. In the ordinary course of nature the development of the organism of divine punishment is so slow, and the span of the divine coördination so vast, that to the ancient mind it became a question whether God did take notice of sin. We see these doubts taking root in the mind of the Psalmist, till he went into the sanctuary of God; and in Plutarch's treatise on the divine punishment, in which he undertakes to answer the question of why the gods are so slow in visiting crime, we find the same question raised. But, as a matter of fact, every human civilization taken in grand reaches illustrates the truth that man himself is a co-worker with God in this business. The human organism is not only to a large

degree self-constructive, but self-rewarding and self-punitive. Thus the particular form that the divine penalty assumes is largely determined by the organism itself acting under God's laws; yet once BEING determined, it cannot escape coördination with God's providential plan, and must become, as the apostle puts it, "an organ of the divine wrath fitted unto destruction." Indeed, in this retroactive sense every darkest brutality is ruled and utilized by God. Nor was the Israelitish development an exception to this general rule. The natural history of civilization is in one of its large aspects a natural history of sin. The Hebrew nation was a section selected from this developing natural history of sin; it was designed to illustrate God's uniform method of commanding and utilizing organisms of sin for his own purposes of salvation.

The fact exists in nature; therefore we find this same fact in the interpretative organism, the only difference being that the coördination is there refracted for the eye by a mechanical type. If the fact were left out, then the organism would not

correspond to the cosmos which it was designed to interpret; but, because it is represented by a mechanical symbol, the critics of to-day too often misread it, declaring that it represents God as the cause of evil, and this effect the critics aver to be due to the crude spiritual intelligence of the Hebrews. Thus, for instance, in those cases where God is represented as sending a lying spirit to Ahab, or an evil spirit from the Lord is represented as possessing Saul, or when certain military brutalities and hardnesses of the heart are recognized, permitted, and regulated, and even utilized as a divine chastisement, we are told that this plainly proves the admixture of error with the revelation. A juster view shows it to be not absolute error, but refraction, caused by the mechanical coördination of an evil thing with the divine symbol. But the truth which was thus radiated from the eternal word, and which then became creative of human perception, *because* powerfully refracted, remains for us, namely, that all evil, whether personal or material, is, notwithstanding its undivine origin, so perfectly coördinated with God's providence,

and so commanded by God's resources, that when it reaches us it is from the Lord. It is the only view unitable with Christ's idea of righteousness. On any other hypothesis a man's environment often becomes positively bereft of God, so that reciprocity with Him through the body is impossible. From this point of view, however, the darkest situation becomes the matrix of the Holy Spirit, and the worst opportunity becomes a strait and narrow way that leadeth unto life. Nor can the fact be too strongly emphasized, that by this very refracting process the more spiritual truth has been conveyed to us. For after ages of perceptive development under Christ's tuition, and particularly after long comparison between the interpretative organism and nature, we have at last got rid of the mechanical effect of the Hebrew organism by first getting rid of the mechanical cast in our own perception. We now see the spiritual nature of God's coördinations, their relation to human liberty — the self-punitive power of the organism. Indeed, so plain has this latter fact become to us that we too often miss altogether God's

grasp on his universe, and think of it — the organism — as punishing and rewarding itself. We thus fashion for ourselves a cosmic idol which often seems cruel, meaningless, malignant. Like the ancient idolaters, we sometimes worship, sometimes defy our God, while, on the whole, we conceive of human life as a battle between the microcosmos who has become civilized and pious, and the macrocosmos which remains blind and hateful. Better were it to see God through a glass darkly, under the heavy refractive effect of the Hebrew theocracy. It would be at least formative of a *purer* vision. The coördination of the cosmic evil with God, the acceptance of it by Him as a part of his plan, is certainly a fact of nature. It is the mystery in nature which the eye of man, unilluminated by God's word, has not been able to read aright. Still is it true that the Lord does call forth serpents and fiery scorpions, ay, and locusts of the *human* kind. Still does He turn rivers into blood. Still does He hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the river of Egypt. Still does He call for the loathsome frogs, the darkness, and

the noisome plague, and still out of the evil organism of a corrupt civilization do they come, even all hideous and noisome and quick-breeding evils, at the divine word to chasten the nation that has consciously departed from Him, or rejected the word of his prophets. Still is it true that leprosy of a moral and social kind follows on spiritual presumption; that moral death and, ultimately, physical destruction follow hypocrisy and profanity. Death also follows the neglect to obey God's sexual law, which was typified by the covenant of circumcision. The terrible retroactive law of the organism still exists. The sole difference between our time and the Jewish is that the coördination of retroactive law with God's personality was then mechanical, symbolic, and, of course, immediate. Now the law is quite as sure, the coördination as perfect, and the punishment as certain, but the process is slow, the coördination invisible, and the punishment often fails of recognition for want of spiritual insight. We see the "Reign of Terror," but do not trace out its spiritual causation.

CHAPTER XIV.

CEREMONIALISM.

A SECOND feature of the Hebrew revelation is ceremonialism. This is in reality neither more nor less than a kind of symbolism. It is a universal method of spiritual interpretation for the psychic man. It is based on the fact, already elucidated, that the material corresponds to the spiritual so as to be its type, prophecy, and medium of transmission. Ceremonialism is, therefore, simply the endeavor of men who feel this fact to select and utilize the symbolism of nature, and thus to construct a spiritualizing environment for the masses, — a matrix of spiritual vitality. It is, in fact, an allegory or drama of the spiritual life. Our modern Salvation Army is a form of ceremonialism; its object is to surround the masses with a vivid drama of the spiritual world, more particularly its heroic warfare, strategy, and leadership.

The priest with his robes, altar, candles, and holy water constitutes a drama of the same genus, though not of the same species. No doubt, ceremonialism has its limits, just as legalism does, beyond which it becomes unspiritual and even immoral: it may be substituted for a higher and better force; it may be obstinately adhered to, when in the process of development it should give way to a better organ; in this case, of course, it becomes a stumbling-block in the path of life. Indeed, its law is the same as that of the artistic nature,—strict subordination to the advancing needs of the spiritual life. When it becomes an object of satisfaction in itself, it is a worthless idol. Indeed, wherever it is conducted to the neglect of the spiritual powers themselves, it is a positive injury, and may well be treated as Josiah treated the brazen serpent of Moses.

Modern critics assert that the ceremonial system of Israel belongs to a later date than Moses. Probably this is true, so far as the elaboration of it is concerned. On the other hand there is evidence that Abraham strictly enjoined on his descend-

ants the rite of circumcision. It was not original with Abraham; it had been practiced by other nations; other men had sought by it to express the consecration of the reproductive energy to God: but in the case of a man, out of whose loins was to spring the interpretative organism of the race, it certainly had a peculiar significance, and he believed it to have been commanded by God in a vision. So, at least, we are told in one of the accounts; but, whatever may be the truth respecting this or the other record, of Abraham's bringing with him into Canaan the rite of sacrifice and the burnt-offering, one thing is clear, — Moses did incorporate circumcision into his structure, together with the beautiful Passover rite that signified so much to Jesus, and, also, the institution of the Sabbath, and in doing so he implanted the germ of the entire system; for ceremonialism is not a mere series of artificial rites, — it is a living spiritualizing force which has a natural rootage in the soul of man. A ritual may be dead in a given case, I admit; so may a tree or flower, but it is usually a product of life. If it is dead,

it is because something has killed it. The religious ceremonial of a people is like its literature. It has its specific germ and law of development; like a plant, it may appropriate foreign elements, but if it be vital it will always subdue them to its own distinct and expanding type. Now, there is no question that Moses did graft upon Israel a specific germ of symbolism or ceremonialism. Its vitality is shown in its selective force. But the most remarkable thing about it was its spiritual coherence; this appears in the institution of the Sabbath. The setting apart of one day from secular to purely spiritual forms is a striking symbol of that spiritualization of labor which constitutes its rest, its sanctification, and its final end. In a perfected spiritual life all labor must be spiritualized, for it can but be seen and pursued in reference to its final end; but for people in an unspiritual stage of development such a ceremonial as the setting apart of a day for a typical Sabbath is of the utmost moral value. The spiritual fact must be presented *in extenso*, under a ceremonial form, before it can be grasped. Thus the

holy day at the end of the week stands as an emblem of a final end and divine rest for man's creative secular processes. It is noteworthy, too, that this positive command to a ceremonial observance stands in the midst of the Decalogue, along with those great moral and spiritual commandments that regulate the reciprocity between man and man, and between man and God.

In other words, we have a ceremonial observance implanted in the very heart of the fundamental law of the theocracy. But reflection shows us that it could not be otherwise, for, as has been already said, the fundamental law itself is cast in a rudimentary and legal form and is closely coördinated with the eye-for-an-eye code. The Mosaic law is a uniform structure of legality, and legality is the rudimentary symbolic form of law; it is, itself, the product of a symbolizing force. Ceremonialism is but the next step, and a necessary step, too; for, as you carry legality upward to its final and spiritual end, that end *must* be presented under the form of an emblem, and its practical relations

under the form of typical observances. The legalizing principle in man is, in the embryonic stage, perfectly normal, provided it works in a spiritual direction. It then becomes a spiritualizing process, and as it feels its way Godward it must inevitably supplement itself with symbolism. Ceremonialism will appear at the centre, like the nucleus in an egg. Thus, as the Mosaic code attempts to coördinate human life and conduct with the idea of God, it must have something formal, something corresponding with its own structure, to represent that idea; nay, more, if the process is to be educative and introspective, as it should be in order to spiritualize, then there must be at the centre not only an emblem, but an expansive one, — a type capable of deep rootage in man's soul, of large unfoldings and rich fruitage. Furthermore, the emblem must illuminate the points of correspondence between God and man. The human soul is feeling after God, if haply it may find Him. The interpretative organism should, therefore, *lead* the human soul by suggesting the points of correspondence which are

dimly felt by the soul itself. The immanence of God must needs be represented by a house of God among human habitations, bringing out the fact that God is resident with us. His spiritual transcendence must be figured by a remote and inviolable shrine; the differentiation between soul and spirit, — especially where the soul is defiled through sin, — by a ceremonial division between the holy and the profane. That which is fit for coördination with the spiritual must appear under the symbol of cleanness; that which is unfit, as uncleanness. But the main feature in a ceremonial system, provided its tendency be spiritual, must of course consist in bringing out the *eirenicon*, or mediating agent between matter and spirit, namely, the consecrated word, or immanent personality.

Here we have the great law of revelation and spiritual genesis. If the world is at any point coördinated with God, it is because some exceptional personality, taking fast hold on men and facts in the fullness of his psychic life, has drawn them Godward and spiritward by the stern subjection of his own soul and body to the

offices of the divine spirit. Thus he has become a mediator, through whom the divine life radiates and touches men, begetting in them the divine likeness. Every such mediator stands, as it were, in the divine sanctuary. Thither, also, even to the altar of God does he lead with stern though joyful constraint his own body, that, sacrificing his animal life to God, yea, pouring it out as it were before God, he may be freely and entirely used by the divine spirit for the purposes of reconciliation; and always the reconciliation is the entire process by which man, under liberty, is brought into correspondence to God, and into absolute harmony with the divine will. Now, as I say, there can be no kind of question that Moses planted the germ of this tendency to feel after God and find Him through symbolism. Without such a process his legal structure would have had no core; it would have been impotent and valueless as an interpretative organism, for it would have been coördinated with *nothing*.

There is fair evidence, too, that the account is correct which represents the

germ as having been given to a special body of men, Aaron and his descendants, for protection and cultivation. It is, indeed, tolerably clear that Moses left a living stem of ceremonialism (at all events he implanted a prolific germ of it in the Decalogue); but the elements of that symbolism were not original with him. The temple, the ark of the covenant, the veil, the priesthood, the sacrifices, and even the Sabbath itself, were forms that already existed in other nations; other souls than the Hebrew had felt after God with them. The characteristic of the Hebrew ceremonial is, not the originality of its forms, but the extraordinary spiritual vitality by which those forms were seized, selected out of the ceremonial of other peoples, purified from their filth and distortions, and built into the distinct type of Hebrew spirituality. In short, their authority does not rest upon their Mosaic origin, or upon any extraneous proof of their supernaturalism, but on the intrinsic spirituality and revelatory power imparted to them by the Hebrew organism itself; and this leads us to the point, that the Hebrew law was not a

mere mechanical scaffolding handed down by external authority: it was a living structure, closely connected at all times with a highly organized centre of vitality. Thus, like the teeth or bones of the human body, it was constantly acted upon, built up and modified, by the life. That life was vested in the prophets, and their position with reference to the law has been greatly misconceived. It has been held that they antagonized the priests and their code. The study of the life of Samuel, who founded the schools of the prophets, shows how false is this position. Samuel was brought up in the Lord's house, was from a child attached to its ceremonial, and united in himself the two offices. The antagonism referred to appears in his case, it is true, but it is not antagonism to the ceremonial, which he defended against Saul with extreme severity, but against the insubordination of it, and particularly its substitution for obedience and faith.[1]

It was this very warfare of the prophets —a warfare like that of the true poet or artist against the mechanical and sensual

[1] 1 Sam. xiii. 9–15; also xv. 22, 23.

tendency of art or literature — that did the most for the ceremonial code; it kept the ceremonial subordinated to spiritual life, and undoubtedly tended to expand it, for the prophetic utterances are full of parallelisms and illustrations drawn from the priests' code: they are poems written upon the same theme, and must have contributed not only to purify but also to enrich it by keeping it face to face with its spiritual ideals and applications. There has been much investigation as to the original meaning of the various rites, but nothing is more evident than that their incorporation into the Hebrew type both purified them from many distortions and developed in them a new spiritual significance. They were the thoughts of men regarding God; in the Hebrew economy they were expanded into larger intelligibility, just as the word of a primitive language takes on a richer and more precise meaning when it is incorporated into a highly civilized tongue.

So it was in regard to animal sacrifices; it is impossible to tell precisely what they meant at the beginning. Doubtless their

significance was too vague for definition. Men dimly perceived the Psyche or soul of the beast: this thing called life struck them with awe as related to the gods; therefore the taking of it, even from an animal, was a sacred act, a divine sacrifice. There was no such thing as secular butchery; an animal was killed before the gods, and eaten on shares with God as a divine communion. Gradually there developed, as we see in Homer, the idea of an atonement. This, too, was a vague idea; the human soul was reaching after something, it knew not what. A sacrificial relationship of the animal life was dimly seen; particularly the pouring out of the blood, in which the life was immanent, was felt to be significant of a relation between man and God. It was but natural, therefore, that in the Hebrew organism, where the points of man's correspondence to God were specially brought out, and where the sacrificial word or life of God was a matter of daily consciousness, where the man of the word felt himself called upon to struggle with God, to weep and suffer with God over the sins of the people, — it is not won-

derful, I say, that in such an organism animal sacrifices should have a new significance; nor, if the story of Moses be at all correct, and he himself was the first great fellow-sufferer with God under the sin of Israel, is it strange that this significance should have been revealed to him, and entered profoundly into his idea of the ceremonial. It is but natural, surely, that he who founded the law and literature should have conceived of the great *motif* of the sacrificial drama.

Certain it is that this *motif* soon became apparent to the greater souls among the Hebrews. Thus one of their prophets cries out, "Sacrifice and burnt-offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared *me*. Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God." David has a growing conception of himself as reaching true kingship through suffering. He is God's sacrificial victim; yet this process does not seem to be completed with himself, — it is to be attained only by his posterity. Carried into ecstasy, he discerns the fruit of his loins as the Lord's Anointed, triumphant, attaining to an immortal kingship through suf-

fering, and so cries out in his vision, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol, neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption." So, too, another great prophet, discerning through this ceremonial typology the significance of sacrifice, — seeing how plainly history corresponded to it, how the spiritualizing head of the race must needs suffer for the race, and how his sufferings must be the matrix of a new conscience, — cries out concerning the coming man of God, "He is led as a lamb to the slaughter, for the transgression of my people was he stricken." Indeed, the Hebrew ceremonial was continually to the prophets a spiritual lens, a medium of suggestion. Nor is anything more wonderful than the final form that the Hebrew ceremonial assumed. It became, indeed, as Jesus declared, a prophecy of what the Christ, the ideal Head, must be. It was a moral miracle; the shockingly distorted forms of the pagan ritual, selected, purified, combined, and vitalized by the priesthood of Israel under the influence of the prophets, became a holy temple of the Lord, a "pattern of things in the

heavens," — a revelation, not of the isolated divine personality, but of humanity, developing into correspondence with God and inhabited by the eternal spirit. It is impossible to conceive of a more beautiful or touching representation. There was the outer court, in which priests and people met, a type of that organic collectivism through which God spiritualizes men by coördinating them as branches about spiritual stems; a type, also, of that meeting-place between the religious and the secular by which the latter is made whole. For what, after all, are these mediating priests but shadows of that heavenly manhood, that stronger, holier brotherhood, which God stores up for us from age to age in those sacred souls who support us in our trials and lift us Godward, as the oak-tree does the branches? and what is that slain sacrifice but a type of that bodily life ever and anon given up into God's hands by some saviour of the race to meet our spiritual necessities? and what is this shrine, with golden candlestick, table of shewbread, and altar of frankincense, but the soul or psyche of man,

lighted up to itself by some priest or hero of divine love, awakened also to its need of God's bread, and by that same self-illumination discovering that bread already provided? nothing less, in fact, than the Lord's own human love, freely offered, as counterpart to which comes that other great self-discovery, namely, an inward altar of joy and praise, whose odors of frankincense may well be called costly, since the humble thanksgiving of the man is kindled by the infinite sacrifice of the heavenly Father. Thus is the human soul, as it enters into correspondence with God, renewed, purified, opened up to itself, filled with sweetness, satisfaction, and light. Furthermore, this Holy of Holies, what is it but the SPIRIT, that innermost and most sacred chamber of our being, seldom visited, veiled to the masses, discovered only to the heroes, turned by some into a citadel of pride, by others into a shrine of self, but silently purified and set in order by the effect of divine revelation on the true worshiper, and unveiled at last to mankind by the greatest of all sacrificial heroes and revelators, who by his

life and death made the innermost and heavenliest to stand forth clear in flesh and blood, and so led us tenderly into the sanctuary of his spirit, showing us at the same time what our own innermost nature shall become when the shrine is unveiled, stripped of self, transformed into the treasure-house of God's law, a throne of his merciful presence, a dwelling-place of his ineffable light?

CHAPTER XV.

MIRACLES.

Obviously the paramount feature of the Hebrew revelation is its peculiar supernaturalism. I call it peculiar because it is not the kind with which the modern world has been familiar; indeed, it is because they are contrary to modern experience that we have been inclined to reject the miracles of the Old Testament, and with them supernaturalism in general, on the ground that the two are identical; but there is a sharp distinction to be drawn between the supernatural and the miraculous. According to some of our ablest philosophers, the spiritual is the supernatural. This is undoubtedly the position of Jesus and of the New Testament writers. In Christ's teaching, matter and spirit correspond to one another; the material forces are correlated with the spiritual; the two are interpenetrable. Any coördination, therefore, of

material forces with spiritual, in such a manner as to exhibit the power of mind, is supernatural; in fact Jesus was continually endeavoring to point out that faith in God was supernatural, — more particularly the triumph of faith over matter — as in the bearing of one's cross. Paul declared that love was the highest supernatural gift of the Spirit. Again, as to the divine supernaturalism, Jesus testified that it was everywhere present. Nothing occurred, not even the fall of a sparrow, that was not taken up by God, and so coördinated with his spirit as to be significant of his mind and productive of his will. Jesus also taught that man was the coördinating agent of God upon earth, and that through him, developing into correspondence with God, and so working more and more with God, there was to be an ever-increasing coordination of earthly forms with God, — an advancing spiritualization or supernaturalization of the material world. And if we study carefully his discourses to his disciples in regard to this process, which he styled the coming of the kingdom, we are

compelled to infer that he looked upon it as certain to be, until its climacteric, very unlike a miracle, but rather like the growth of the seed in the field, or the leaven in the lump, an exceedingly gradual and comprehensible process, — man's soul slowly discovering the spiritual potencies and completing the coördinations that were involved in the kingdom of God, and thus advancing to complete supernaturalization, along the pathway of natural law, by so gentle a grade that the supernatural should not seem at all alien to our earthly nature.

Undoubtedly it is this kind of supernaturalism, — that of the sunshine, the dew, and the lilies, that of the still small voice, and that of Christ's influence (for we recognize these as all standing together in one group), — it is this divinely human supernaturalism, I say, with which every Christian is familiar, not because it has been proved to him, but because Christ has given him eyes to see it. It is this which lies back of all evolution, making evolution itself even more wonderfully supernatural than the old conception of crea-

tion. If we were to select a word by which to designate this as a whole, it would be the word "organic," since it is its characteristic that it is manifested only in connection with organs. True, it may be poured out with sudden fullness, as the life is poured out upon the trees with the sunshine of the spring tide, but that is because the organism is ready for it. In short, it may be called organic because, like all life, it corresponds to the development of the organism and has no manifestation without it.

On the other hand, a miracle is a manifestation of the supernatural that does not perceptibly correspond to the organism; for instance, the sudden turning of the Nile into blood. That phenomenon, as recorded in the Bible, professed to be the immediate effect of the divine spirit on nature; but as we are not familiar in our own experience with any such causative mental force, or any such degree of correlation between mind and matter, it is to us a miracle. This is undoubtedly what men mean when they say a miracle is contrary to natural law, or to evolution. We know

very little about natural law and very little about evolution; we have only just begun to study these subjects: but we know well enough when a reputed supernatural event does not correspond to the organism of nature, so far as it falls within our observation. If a fact narrated in the Hebrew Scripture corresponds to nature as it develops before our eyes, then nature is a witness to the credibility of the story; otherwise the testimony must be strong enough to overcome this apparent want of correspondence with nature, and as nature now to most scientists means evolution, anything that does not correspond to that must necessarily to their minds require a compensating degree of testimony. This is reasonable. When Lobenguela was told by his envoys, on their return from England, that they had crossed the water in an iron ship, he did not believe it, on their unsupported testimony, because it did not correspond to the organism of nature, as he had observed it, that iron should float; and his position is exactly that of those who object to the miracles of the Old Testament. The position is entirely logi-

cal up to a certain point. Nature, certainly, whether we view her from the standpoint of naturalism or supernaturalism, is uniform. God's method, as pointed out by Christ or by the evolutionist, is slow and educative; even the most amazing results are brought about by gradually developing correspondences. Unfortunately, however, for the practical operation of Lobenguela's logic, the greatest philosopher is liable, like him, to be limited in his range of observation; correspondences may exist of which he has not taken note, and, while the great correlations of the universe remain the same, their actual coördinations may vary so greatly as to change the outward aspect of the organism altogether, so that what in one age or locality seems miraculous should in another, or in a different stage of apprehension, seem no more so than an ordinary event. In other words, the miraculous is wholly relative to our perception. It is a miracle simply because we do not see the organism to which it corresponds.

Indeed, it is a curious fact that at the present day our more extended observa-

tion of occult phenomena has brought out exactly the opposite objection to the miracles of the Bible. The gist of this position is that the miracles amount to nothing as divine manifestations, because they correspond to the phenomena of hypnotism, and so really turn out to be simply a phase of evolution. This is undoubtedly the side to which the whole argument against miracles will ultimately shift, and, though there is an element of error in it, it is not altogether wide of the mark. As to the main point, that the miracles are not a defiance of nature, but have a basis in the structure of things, there can, I think, be no doubt. Indeed, it is a curious fact that the Scriptures, studied in the light of the latest modern investigations, do unquestionably present this idea. It is now established as firmly as almost any scientific fact that there is a wonder-working power in the human soul by which it is able to see visions, to project phantasms, to induce a state of ecstasy or vision in other persons, and even to cause physical changes, such as cures, or scars like the stigmata of St. Francis. There have doubt-

less been many illusions and impostures, but there is a residuum of scientifically observed facts sufficient to establish the wonders of hypnotism. This term has disagreeable associations, and in reality it explains nothing; but, coming from the word "sleep," it suggests much, as, for instance, that this peculiar human supernaturalism, as Coleridge would call it, may be developed by throwing the practical faculties into repose or passivity.

In a scientific book, entitled "The Law of Psychic Phenomena," the author classifies the miracles of Scripture with hypnotic phenomena, and after an exhaustive discussion of present theories he advances a hypothesis. There are, according to him, a subjective and an objective mind. The objective mind conveys a suggestion to the subjective, which is the eternal transcendent self. By this process the subjective mind is brought into a state of exaltation, which radiates outward through the brain and nervous system, and thus the hypnotic effect is produced. The phantasm is a real entity, inasmuch as it is a projection or subtle materialization

of the entire exalted organism. Of course it is not necessary to assume that this formulation of the hypnotic law is final, but it is probably correct as far as it goes; and, in general outline, this division of the mind into subjective and objective corresponds to the soul and spirit of Scripture. So, also, this hypnotic law corresponds to Christ's great law of revelation through the subordination of the Logos to the Spirit; while the idea of the ghost or phantasm, being an actual projection or radiation of the personality, uniting in itself the transcendent element of the spirit and the material element of the Psyche, is singularly correspondent to Christ's idea of the radiated spirit, which did to the disciples assume the phantasmal form of fiery tongues, and to Jesus himself the semblance of a dove. Nor does there seem to be any question that the state of ecstasy has followed this law; for if we study the notable instances of it, from the visions of the apostles down to that of the maiden of Lourdes, including the cases of Joan of Arc and Savonarola, George Fox and Whitfield, the process is always the

same. Such things come not to a man while his objective mind is absorbed with practical ways and means. They do not come to those people who have nothing but the objective or practical mind. They come to the man of large or high sensibility at some moment when his objective mind is forced back in helplessness, or withdrawn in voluntary contemplation, so as to become the channel of the unseen. Then first the spirit, if it be strong and rational, catches the blessed light of eternity, and is exalted by it into fearless joy. Following that vision, the brain and nervous centres are carried to a state of exaltation, the heart beats high, the lungs breathe more deeply, the circulation quickens, the whole physical man is an electric battery, every nervous ganglion charged to the utmost with magnetic force. Thus the body is turned into a perfect medium, and the spirit materializes itself.

But, setting Mr. Hudson's book one side, if we put together the Old Testament documents, according to the best evidence, we find that they contain the story of the development of a vast organism for the gen-

eration of psychic phenomena. The whole process is genetic. There is no violent leap. Consider, in the first place, the starting-point of the Hebrew revelations, — the Accadian empire, the twentieth century before Christ. Human thought was but little occupied with the mechanical or philosophical structure of nature. It was her symbolism, her mystical language, with which men's souls were taken up. In Ur of the Chaldees, a great theocratic cosmic religion prevailed. There was little religious liberty: men's minds were moulded by a gigantic symbolism; all their actions were governed by oracles, seers, and priestly interpretations of that shadowy life that hovered within the veil of nature. The psychic sensibility was at the flood-tide. The spiritual was, indeed, but feebly developed; yet the animal man possessed so much of vague, undeveloped spiritual instinct that he nestled toward the brooding divine life as the fledgeling creeps under the wing of the mother bird. Doubtless this feeling after God was largely for selfish ends, such as protection and individual guidance; none the less, however, was it

urgent, as we see in the old Accadian hymns; and, in the absence of something better, it had naturally resulted in the development of this hypnotic power, of trances and ecstasies. But the visions of God were distorted, for the eye of man was evil. We see this as we contemplate the fragments of Accadian literature that have come down to us. The sensibility of the heart was fixed upon animal pleasure: it shrank from a spiritual deity; it felt the antagonism of the spirit to the flesh; it drew back from the law of spiritual evolution; it dreaded the power that formed conscience; it did not like to retain such a God in its mind. Yet it clung to the psychic relation with God; it yearned after a passional animal deity akin to itself. By a false refraction, through its own perverted perception, it changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image or conception of its own. It found what it was looking for; then it divided the brooding divine life, which it could but feel, into cosmic gods and into tutelary passional local deities, each having its shrine, its coterie of priests and rhapso-

dists, clairvoyants, wonder-workers, who overdid their work and turned vision into frenzy. Thus, along with the natural development of seership, there came to be a disease of the soul called demoniac possession, an epidemic of occultism, in which the faculties were helpless under the influence of an evil psychism, and were swayed by a bestial exaltation.

Out of the midst of this spiritual tyranny, distortion, and disease emerges Abraham, a man of unusual vitality. He, too, is a seer, but his vision is that of one living and true God. His first vision has in it a distinctly spiritual conception, namely, that through sacrifice, by separation from kindred, by pilgrimage in an unknown land, he is to become God's instrument of blessing to the race. He goes out, not knowing whither, depending upon the suggestion of his God. The new spiritual organ in him seeks an environment suitable to it. His strong practical faculties are subordinated to this necessity. He depends for the initiation of his action upon visions and divine providences, which are in themselves suggestive coördi-

nations; he is led into Canaan by this process. Here he wanders about in a nomadic life; each place of his habitation turned into a symbol of the divine presence by some striking vision, and by a group of events associated with that vision, these successive groups constituting a progressive revelation of his God. Thus the spiritual organ survives and develops into correspondence to its environment. During all this time he is sustained by the promise of a child; it is not fulfilled till he is a hundred years old, but in the mean time his subjective mind has been led by visions, and fed and moulded by divine providences, until it has become the mighty overshadowing force of his personality, and the son born to him in his old age is the heir of this specific development. Faith, with Isaac, is an instinct of self-preservation. He clings to God like a gray moth to a gray tree. Now, this process goes on with that Hebrew stock for four or five hundred years, increasing all the time in Abraham's line, this peculiar function of the soul, or Pysche, making it more and more the passive in-

strument of suggestion, raising the spirit to higher capacities for vision, and filling Palestine with suggestive experiences, until the land of Israel is enough, simply by its associations, to throw a sensitive soul into ecstasy. Meantime the great law of heredity is at work, producing its variations, while it concentrates and develops the psychic gift in certain individuals, — like Joseph, for example, — in each case the specific quality of the gift being determined by environment.

Thus, under the pressure of Egyptian slavery, when the whole nation is blindly but intensely drawing near to its traditional God for help, Moses arises. In him seership is at the full; yet Egyptian culture gives it a peculiar cast, and unites it to a high degree of intellect. His wonderful gift is yet further developed and specialized by his sufferings for his countrymen and by his lonely exile. At eighty years the vision and the call come to him with overwhelming power. The organism is ripe for it then; the brooding desert finishes the work. He sees a burning bush with an angel in it, hears from it a call

to deliver his enslaved countrymen. The vision is a perfect allegory of Jehovah, the self-existent Personality, the divine immanent life; in the world, supplying the fire of life to it, yet not consuming it. Yielding himself up to this vision, he was forever vision-led. So far as the records go, we find no trace of any great strategic power or statesmanship in Moses; indeed, the modern idea of him is a misconception. He was a tremendous personality, but his genius was neither military nor political. His laws, like his marches, were the result of visions, and it was by the power of those visions, their spirituality, their practicality, their coherence, by the profound hold they had on himself, and by their extraordinary correspondence with God's world and God's providences, that he succeeded in delivering Israel from the Pharaohs, and in bringing them back to their old *Patria*, the land of spiritual suggestion. This, however, was but the beginning of his work; his *post-mortem* leadership is the amazing fact. For fourteen hundred years he continued to guide and shape the minds of the Hebrew people. His pro-

jected personality was the national spirit. Standing together with the natural features and spiritual associations of Canaan, it constituted a living stem of which the prophets and heroes were the branches.

It is difficult for us to conceive of the effect produced by planting a whole people in the midst of such associations, and attaching them, both by law and also by religious and patriotic feeling, to such a transcendently psychic type of faith. Add to this the inculcation, both by precept and penalty, for hundreds of years, of the idea that the divine vision was paramount, and that no man could initiate anything without it, and we have the spectacle of a whole nation placed by every possible attraction and constraint under the conditions of spiritual suggestion. Not only that, but the conditions excluded, under heavy penalty, any other kind of suggestion but the Mosaic.

Now it is difficult not to perceive in all this a kind of natural evolution. Furthermore, the Hebrew records recognize a sporadic occultism existing side by side with theirs. There were the magicians of

Egypt, who up to a certain point imitated the miracles of Moses. There was the false prophet Balaam, a snatch of whose clairvoyant psalmody has been handed down to us. There was the witch of Endor with her phantasm of Samuel.

Moreover we have here and there a hint of the method by which the Hebrew seers brought about the state of ecstasy: sometimes, notably in the schools of the prophets, it was through the use of music; again by gazing fixedly at the precious stones in the high priest's ephod. In the case of David, the king's hand was surrendered to a mystical guidance, which formed the plans of the temple.

In brief, we have abundant evidence of the best sort, because inadvertent, that the Hebrew visions developed under the same conditions with other occult phenomena, the difference being that the Hebrew occultism was far mightier, far more significant, and that it was devoted to the one God and his righteousness, — a difference that we might naturally expect when we consider the colossal nature of the Hebrew organism, the singular coherence of its

system, and the spirituality of its origin. There can be little doubt, therefore, that in the near future the Hebrew narrative, inclusive of the visions, will be accepted as giving us an entirely truthful and naturalistic history of the development of religion in that age.

While we exercise our judgment critically on the question of authenticity, we shall find no reason for rejecting the clairvoyant element. Its stories will not be regarded as myths, for a myth does not correspond to the organism; "omne vivum ex ovo," and the Hebrew history clearly gives us a sufficient ovum. Some of the stories may be poems, but the poems will be felt to be true to the life of the time. There is a manifest advantage in this view, because we are not obliged to do violence to one great principle of the higher criticism by denying a certain genuine, self-evidencing spiritual element that runs through the Old Testament. Indeed, by classifying the visions of Israel with the same sort of occultism that appears to have followed in every age certain exalted souls, like Joan of Arc, St. Francis, Savonarola, George Fox, Martin

Luther, and even lesser personalities when thrown into a state of exaltation, we can retain the whole portraiture of these Old Testament heroes, precisely as Keim preserves the whole of St. Paul's biography, including his estatic vision of the risen Christ, without sacrificing either intuition or logic. It corresponds to the structure of the cosmos that under certain conditions there should be occult phenomena. Magnify the conditions by a thousand years of peculiar environment, natural selection, and specialization, and you may expect a transcendent kind of occultism compared with which everything else of the kind will be a mere dwarf or abortion.

That human experience on such a subject should differ widely is no more extraordinary than that there should be ice in New England and dates in Africa. Evolution is a broad process. A man on one side of the organism may have no experience of what is going on on the other. So far, therefore, as the reality of the visions is concerned, it seems inevitable that we should all come together on the ground of their entire naturalism; and,

after all, devout students of the Bible need find nothing to regret in this.

Surely if God caused his revelation in Christ to take the organic form that is common to the visible world, He meant that it should be considered an organism and studied as such; and, if it makes the supernatural akin to us, it also makes us akin to the supernatural. It strikes a blow at our darkest doubt, the doubt of our own inherent spirituality. If it naturalizes heaven, it supernaturalizes earth. Besides, we have worked in the interest of truth when we have classified anything. Having found the class to which it belongs, we are on the unmistakable road to genus and species.

We have recognized the fact that the visions belong to the class of occult phenomena, also that the occultism consists merely in our ignorance of the law. We have seen that they correspond to the organism and to its evolution; we have grasped in part the law; we have found that it is possible, proceeding on the basis of this law, for a man to induce these phenomena in himself or in others. Now

comes the vital question, Was this merely human supernaturalism, or was it divine? Is it unreasonable to suppose that these Hebrew prophets spoke the truth when they solemnly declared that their visions were induced by the Almighty God? They were not without an opportunity for distinguishing between different kinds of occultism. Such phenomena abounded. They were of all sorts, morally speaking, — witchcraft, demonism, false prophetism, commercial clairvoyance. With all these varieties the prophets of Israel were forced into contact. They had an unceasing struggle with these vagrant types, for they recognized in them a distinctly hostile aim. Is there, then, anything unreasonable in believing their testimony that they were acted upon by a power morally different from that which wrought the other phenomena, — a power above themselves that made for righteousness? If, as Jesus taught, man corresponds to God, then God must correspond to man. If man can induce a vision, shall we say that the infinite God cannot? If man can form conditions favorable to such a process, so as

to develop the state of vision by a series of natural steps, giving little shock because of their gradation, cannot the Eternal do the same? If the feeble life centred within a human being is able under certain conditions to affect matter without the mechanical intervention of the organs, may not the divine life also act psychically? If matter is everywhere correlated with life, why not with the *Divine life?*

Then, if we look back and consider how this psychic organism was formed, what ages it required, what vast coördinations it involved, transcending all human contrivance or execution, — such as the bringing of the Hebrews from Ur to Canaan, their slavery in Egypt, the birth of Moses, the Babylonish captivity, the Restoration, the Roman conquest, the crucifixion of Christ, — it is difficult to escape the conviction that over all these coördinations, which issued in a spiritual theocracy, presided the Eternal Life. If evolution and history anywhere give evidence of a power that makes for righteousness, certainly there is evidence of it in these Hebrew annals.

If, again, we consider the condition of mankind at the beginning of the Hebrew movement, — if we recognize the fact, referred to under symbolism and legalism, that man's spiritual nature was in an embryonic stage, that it could only be reached and developed through symbols and visions; if we take in the fact that man's higher sensibility had at first to be drawn out, like his intellectual nature, by a kindergarten process, by object-lessons, by mechanical and outward representations of divine values, in brief, by what is now called "anthropomorphism," — is it unreasonable to suppose that "the power not ourselves which makes for righteousness" should lay hold of that perceptive element in man which was the most sensitive, nearest to the surface, and most akin to symbolism, and should develop this gradually into a vast organism, through which He could communicate, without shock and in a coherent manner, a gigantic and gradually developing revelation of himself? Every life has its organism. Why should there not be an organism of the Logos, that eternal life that was with God? In

a primeval age there was a certain type of fishes who were the progenitors of the birds. They possessed anticipatory organs, such as a rudimentary lung by which they could breathe out of water, and a membranous wing by which they could fly up and browse upon the shrubs that overhung the stream.

This prehistoric organism was not only divinely prophetic, a word of God to be fulfilled, but it was also formative; by it the primitive constitution was enabled to stock itself with better food, and thus bring its nervous centres to the higher vitalization requisite for new organs. Is it unreasonable to believe that in the *spiritual* development of the race, there should be an anticipatory organism, not only for supplying the spiritual vitality of that day with the bread of God which it could not otherwise obtain, but for the purpose of storing up a stock of spiritual energy, out of which there might be evolved a new spiritual centre of life and perception?

This agrees with the genius of the Old Testament. It is pathetic to see the sense of incompleteness with which the Hebrew

prophets were filled; psalmody and vision alike looked eagerly forward to that which was to come. The word "prophetic" characterizes the whole.

There was throughout a sense of parturition, a faith not so much in the organism itself as in that which, under the brooding Spirit of God, it was about to bring forth. In accepting this view, therefore, we come close to the standpoint of the writers themselves; but if this was a divine spiritualizing organism, if the divine visions were a fact, then it seems reasonable that there should have been miracles — or, in other words, outward spiritual effects — on a large scale. They do not occur now, true, but we have no such organism. They do not occur, or at least occur only in a sporadic way and on a small scale, in other histories. True, but no historic people save the Jews had any such vast and coherent psychic organism. Why should not the environment correspond to the organism? That is the law of development. Wherever there have been psychic visions, there have been outward experiences which simulated the

Hebraic; these wandering and imperfect types point to a perfected type, and it may well be asked whether such an organism could be developed at all without miracles. A monk shut up in a cell might perhaps be led by visions without coming into violent collision with facts, but a nation cannot move without constant interaction with the world. There *must* be outward correspondence. A race of slaves could not throw off their bondage, and march under the guidance of visions out from the most powerful empire of the day, through a foodless and waterless desert, in the midst of warlike tribes, wrest a whole country from an exceedingly valiant people dwelling in fortified towns, and build up an empire of their own, they themselves being all the time passively led by visions, unless outward circumstances and hard facts were somehow made to correspond to the visions. Yet this is the problem of the Israelites. In the light of our modern knowledge, the greatest miracle of all is the simple historic fact of the Exodus, — the march to and conquest of Canaan by a race of slaves.

We know the perfect military equipment of Egypt. We know the desert; we have the archives of Lachish; we know the civilization, the literature, and the military power of the Canaanites. We know the Israelites had nothing competent to all this. Had Moses been a great general, had there been any strategy or adequate preparation, they would appear in the account; we should have an echo of them, at least, in some of the very ancient historic fragments that the Jewish historians have pieced together for us. The history of the Greeks pictures the Greek mind. We see what it depended upon. In the Hebrew history we see the Mosaic mind. We see that it depended *absolutely* on visions and miracles. It clung to its *faith* for self-preservation; it looked upward rather than around; its stronghold was *Jehovah*. Each record tells the same story. Safety was in *faith*. The man who had it survived. He who had the most unquestioning trust in the divine vision escaped and conquered, for faith was the quality that adapted him to his environment. What, then, was that environment? Was there no gray tree to

which the gray moth clung? Surely such a view of things must have rested on some basis of fact. We cannot accuse the Israelites of imagining a spiritual environment *for two thousand years*. That were a long stretch of fancy. They were not spiritual enough; besides, imagination does not account for the Egyptians, nor for the march through the desert, nor for the disappearance of the Canaanites.

We are forced back upon the fundamental principle — organism and environment correspond to one another. This is rational. As we have already seen, matter corresponds to life. The highest form of life is mental and spiritual. Matter therefore must be correlated with the spiritual life. If we believe the teaching of Jesus, we are bound to receive this. According to Jesus also, man corresponds to God. When, in human experience, the psychic life is wholly given up to its supreme office of suggestion and radiation, it not only feeds the spirit with visions, but, exalted in turn by the spirit and surcharged with spirit force, it acts upon matter in a direct and causative way, independently of the

organs; it radiates the creative, causative spirit. The Hebrew writers tell us plainly that these wonders were not their work; they were caused by God's Word and Spirit. This agrees with the law of human revelation, with the individual human organism: why should it not have been the case with that vast Hebrew organism? A tremendous corporate psychism stored up for five hundred years reaches a crisis. Why should it not break forth first into phantasms of transcendent spiritual glory, and then put forth corresponding power over matter? Why not surely, if it was the organism of Almighty God, which had been more and more deeply penetrated by his life and surcharged by his Spirit? Consider that this was the sole interpretative organism selected and designed to radiate, both the spirit and idea of God in his relations to the world, and the laws growing out of that relationship. These laws control matter; all progress is conditioned on them. Why should not God and these laws be focused, as it were, through a miracle and sign? It is the only way they could be refracted to the

spiritual eye of that age. A lens that does not correspond to the eye cannot develop it. The legality, the symbolism, the visions, all stood together; they constituted a moving drama of God in his world. It is inconceivable that the drama came by chance. Man could not have constructed it, not even Moses comprehended it. It must have been developed by Him who is the innermost cause of all evolution, the life of every organism; and if He constructed it and led it on its path, why should He not have done precisely what the Hebrew writers represent? — why not have caused the environment to complete the drama? It certainly could not have been developed without some such environment. It would have been a lame kind of drama without it, — only half the truth, and the smaller half at that. And this brings me to the value of the miracle as presented by the sacred writers. It was never an isolated prodigy, or a mere proof of God's power: it was always an essential, coherent part of the spiritual drama; nay, it was the act by which the drama touched God's throne.

It is impossible to read the Hebrew Scriptures sympathetically and not perceive that, to the minds of the writers, the servitude under the Pharaohs was something more than a literality. That groaning under the yoke, that cry to God against the oppressor, that struggle of the human spirit against a crushing materialism, the fact that the enslaved people were themselves the objects of God's choice, and that it was by this very experience that He was shaping them for his purpose, certainly stood for a universal law. No human soul can awake to the realm of ideality without realizing the tyranny of the material world; yet it is under the very pressure of that tyranny that aspiration is developed, and the choicest spirits prepared for their work; the march "out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage," stands forever, as it stood to the Hebrew prophets, an allegory of all spiritual progress: every human spirit has its Pharaoh, and the day of the departure out of Egypt was All-Souls' day. The plagues of Egypt were, undeniably, fit symbols of those direful portents, those loathsome

parasites, those foul corruptions and fatal judgments, that everywhere attend a neglect to heed the cry of the human soul against the oppressive materialism that is destroying it. They are but the retroactions of a wide-sweeping social law. But it needs the miracle of Israel to teach the fact that social law takes in God; they reckon ill who count Him outside of their social evolution. The Passover, too, was a solemn shadow of a spiritual law that runs through history. The Israelites, divided from the Egyptians by their symbolic attitude, sitting in the dead of the night within closed doors with staves in their hands, spurning that luxury of which the leaven was a type, ready to take distasteful bread and bitter herbs if only they might be free, sharing their sacrificial feast with God as though they would share their Father's livelihood with Him (the blood of their victim for a sign upon the door-post), stood for that type of man in whose favor God ever discriminates and whom God ever leads; for the great principle of judgment in God's providence is this: those men whose consciences can be

awakened only by the dreadful effects of retroactive law must have their revelations of God in such sort; but those that can be touched by the sacrificial souls whom God sends to suffer for them, — to them the Father's own sacrifice becomes a sufficient revelation for the conscience, and they are graciously led out of all bondage.

The cloud, also, and the pillar of fire, by which Israel were guided, are surely both type and prophecy of that divine manifestation experienced by Jesus and promised to his disciples, — a manifestation which means not only guidance but companionship; nay, more than this, the type has its fulfillment in that brooding Providence, that shadow of God's wing, which enables the disciplined follower of Christ to cry out with peculiar exultation, "He leadeth me." The bringing of Israel into that place of trial, the Red Sea before them, the army of Pharaoh at their backs, is a touch of spiritual experience drawn to the life: it is a touch of the true Hebraism also; the whole national history lies in it as in a germ.

For, in the Hebrew account, faith was

the one great vital principle which coördinated the organism with God's character and purpose. I do not mean that sort of passive, indifferent faith that the subject of hypnotism has in the operator: I mean the turning of the better nature to God, the voluntary response of the conscience, the moral affections, and the will to God's moral commands and spiritual character. The faith referred to is like that of the child when it responds to the spiritual care, love, and direction of the parent. It is the beginning of moral reciprocity, of a mutual holy affection; it is the first step in the evolution of the animal toward the spiritual life. This actual moral reciprocity of the individual Israelite with his God was, so to speak, the spinal cord of the whole organism; here its permanent results were stored up; here began the formation of the true spiritual perception, which was, as has been already pointed out, inclusive of the whole soul. It was by the development of faith in the individual man that the entire life of Israel was to be purified and spiritualized, the eye made single and the vision clear. All this

was, of course, as inseparable from the revelatory process as the making of better object-glasses is from the revelations of astronomy. The object-glass is the final coördinating fact in the astronomical revelation; so likewise it was this eye of faith which was the final fact in the coördination of the Hebrew organism with God's Spirit. The Scripture admits that there were psychic wonders produced by psychic organisms, subjective wonders produced by human witchery, demoniac wonders produced by organisms surrendered to evil powers; but the wonderful works of God required not only psychic but moral faith, a mind actively and passively surrendered to the Holy Ghost, for the miracle itself was a token of the mind of the Spirit. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as on dry land. Whenever faith failed, the organism was wrecked, it was no longer in the pathway of the divine mind; therefore whatever path led to faith was, for the Hebrew, good strategy. As I have said, nothing could be more true to the Hebrew thought than this. Of course I am speaking of the old Hebrew thought, not of the

modern Judaism which is its corpse. God leads men according to their structure: the path of development for an organism must correspond to the organism; the leading, therefore, of the Israelites by the fiery pillar into this position of acute trial for their faith, where there was no chance whatever for material help, where every energy must be turned in upon faith and the divine must be brought to the front, is a perfect carrying out of the spiritual drama.

By just such processes spirituality is developed universally. And when Moses, *himself* a wondrous personal symbol of the divine sacrifice, stood before the sea and lifted up his shepherd's staff, — the memento of his suffering for Israel, the sceptre of his divine leadership, the symbol of God's own Headship, — then, from that unseen environment that compasses us all about, there came the answer, swift, awful, majestic, which completed the drama, which flashed forth the mind of God, and showed the interpretation of life to be His. It is time there was an end to that talk about the silliness

and ignorance of those who believe in the miracles: there is no solid ground for such abuse; the miracles are not unreasonable. There is surely nothing unreasonable in the position of Christ, that nature and the supernatural are correlated with one another, and that God's Word is the supreme natural force with which all other forces stand together or are coördinated; as a mere *hypothesis* it is quite as reasonable as any. And, if this is not unreasonable, why should any of its applications be unreasonable?

Moreover, such a miraculous organism agrees with God's method of specialization; the human race is like a body having different members, each of which contributes to the upbuilding of the whole. Thus in each race there is developed a specific value. It was an essential thing that psychism should be lifted out of the mire, selected, sanctified, and erected into an organ for divine illumination through an environment that nutrified it to the utmost; but it takes only a glance to see that this could not be a common human experience. There are other organs, quite

as important to manhood as the psychic, that must needs be developed at its expense. To bring out the physical powers and the economic faculties, there is needed the pressure of a strictly mechanical environment: put the crumbs persistently close to the nest of the bird and he will have neither wing nor brain worth speaking of. Man being as he is, it is necessary that he should have to struggle for existence; that he should be surrounded by a coercive environment not too suggestive of divine gentleness; that nature should present itself to him as an inflexible series of forces driving him out from his vision of paradise, and compelling him to till the ground from which he was taken, which ground, also, stimulates his will and inventiveness by its bringing forth of weeds and thistles. Indeed, taking men as a whole, there is never a time when they do not need this compulsory aspect of nature. Lead a man by visions wholly and it will stunt his intellect; feed him on miracles and he becomes lazy and egotistic. It is good for the moral nature, too, that a man should feel his weakness and depend-

ence, and learn the great lesson of patience by this mechanical aspect of things. So will he creep closer to that Infinite Life who alone creates and controls. But while this is vastly important for his secular and moral faculties, it is essential to his spiritual affections, and to the growth of his moral character as a whole, that he should have significant providences suggesting the presence and care of the Creator, — answers of God to the cry of the soul.

Still more is it needful for the race that this kind of special providence should be carried up into a series of vast and overwhelmingly suggestive coördinations, standing together with some colossal organism of faith, so that the interior and spiritual relations of life should be projected upon the field of human history. An economy of the dramatic is essential to the fair development of the race. This is peculiarly true of the terrible miraculous judgments. Like the legal and ceremonial punishments, they are dramatic anthropomorphic representations of retroactive spiritual law. If universally extended, they would terrorize mankind. On the

other hand, their manifestation in connection with an interpretative organism is tenderly merciful; it interprets to us the laws of life: God does not universally and literally smite the Sabbath-breaker with death, but whoever breaks the great law for the spiritualization of work is destroyed by the retroactive effect of that law. Hence the tender mercy of a drama of retroactive law. The God of the Old Testament miracles was no more severe than the God of Jesus Christ. Severity is justice to the organism. That same severity exists in nature. It is the legality, the symbolism, the dramatization, that cause the appearance of greater severity. In reality all that was going on then is going on to-day. If we were to sum up the effect of the Divine Drama fairly, it would come to this, that God is a Conditioned Personality.

There is no such thing as an isolated revelation of God; there is no *isolated God.* He is self-limited; He does not live apart; his acts are necessarily modified by other lives; his life is the manifestation of his character as affected by the field of mov-

ing events and personalities in which it appears. So it is with a *human* revelation. Mr. Lincoln was a man of great humanity, devoted to his country, its peace, its citizens of every section; above all else, merciful in disposition. Nor did his character ever change in these respects; yet, through the retroactive effects of constitutional law, and through the mal-organization of forces brought about by the Rebellion, he became to the people of the South a cruel devastator; nay, through his armies and generals, he became a man of blood, a deceiver, a waster of homes, a destroyer of thousands of husbands, brothers, fathers, and the cause of untold misery to millions both North and South, and this character he maintained to the bitter end. There could be no greater contrast than between Lincoln the humanitarian and Lincoln the destroyer of the South. The explanation is simple: the ruler who lives in an organism must live according to its laws. If those laws are inverted, the ruler's life will take on an inverted aspect. If his subjects turn the organism into hell, then he, however sick at heart, must

needs be hell's ruler, wielding hell's instrumentality with heaven's energy for heaven's purpose.

So, too, with God. In man God is self-limited, for man is creative; he is God's chief agent for evolution, which is progressive organic coördination. The divine and human are, therefore, two foci in all development. If man so coördinates facts as to make a system of sin and penalty, then God must use that system of sin and penalty with almighty power for the training of man. His action must correspond to the organism. That is God's justice. Behind it is God's love. So the Jehovah of the Old Testament is throughout a God self-limited by man's creative power, a God whose sorrow can no more be fathomed than his love, his patience, or his hope.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FULFILLER.

In the celebrated discussion between Dr. Wace and Mr. Huxley, on the claims of Christianity, Dr. Wace appeals to the life of Christ, to which Mr. Huxley replies, What is the life of Christ? For himself he confesses that he gives up the question in despair. The attempt to construct, out of the fragments and myths that have come down to us, a rational life, seems to him like the attempt to put together the vast remains of some unknown prehistoric animal.

No illustration could be happier; it forcibly characterizes all the rationalistic attempts at a life of Jesus, from Strauss down. They are learned, but they are all, like Mr. Eber's Rameses, anachronisms. In each case the critics have absolutely discarded the position in which they found things. They have rejected the Gospels as utterly untrustworthy, because of the

miraculous element that runs through them. In fact, at the bottom of all their trouble lies an entire failure to understand the organism and environment out of which Jesus was developed. They are acute, but their circle of observation has been too narrow.

Their premise is that the social organism has always been alike, as regards the miraculous; but this premise can never be proved. Indeed, the opposite fact is more and more coming to light. These critics have therefore been like a body of scientists who, discovering in Siberia the remains of an animal evidently belonging to the tropics, have refused to accept the evidence of juxtaposition, articulation and general correspondence, simply because such a structure could not exist in a cold climate. Should it turn out that Siberia had at one time presented a tropical environment, their whole position would be undermined. The same thing holds true of Christ's life. Environment is the clue to construction here. Once admit the facts just presented in regard to the Hebrew organism, and the problem of con-

struction is finished for us; the life of Jesus becomes perfectly rational: it corresponds throughout to nature and to God, and is coherent in all its parts. And this is a great relief simply from an intellectual point of view, for it saves us from being obliged to swallow the statement that the resurrection and all the other miracles, characterized as they are by the most profound spiritual significance, were actually created by a few fishermen between A. D. 33 and A. D. 44, which is what the mythical theory amounts to in a nutshell.

But if we accept the fact of the Hebrew nation being not only an interpretative but a formative spiritual organism for the race, then the Gospels are just what we should expect: their peculiar supernaturalism corresponds perfectly to nature. There is no gulf between the Old Testament and the New. As we read its pages, we are still looking into the great organism of occult force which, along with its upward evolution, has here and there degenerated and gone to seed in witchcraft, demonism, and resulting forms of nervous disease. The heads of the

nation have departed from the pathway of faith, and have led the people into lifeless dogmas and traditions, while at the same time they have clung to their hypnotic phenomena. The threatened judgment of Jehovah has come upon them, — they are heavily chastened. Chastening has driven the better part of the people back upon God. Furthermore, the mightiest of all the prophets has arisen in this hour of extremity and profoundly touched the conscience of the nation. The true pyschic element in the Hebrew stock has meanwhile not lost ground. It has been refined and purified for a nobler work. We see it flashing forth here and there in visions like those of Simeon, Anna, and John the Baptist, or welling up into prophetic psalmody as in the case of Zachariah and Elizabeth, and in the so-called Magnificat of Mary the mother of Jesus. These psalms and visions have in them the same quality of inspiration. The soul is evidently entranced; the people who utter them are simple; they have in them no permanent gift of genius; their words are plainly the effect of sudden religious ecstasy. Yet

not only is their language sublime and the sensibility singularly pure, but the hope which they express is logical, — it corresponds to the facts. There is in it an indescribably pathetic intuition. The hour of Israel's redemption has come. Jehovah is about to appear; his way must be prepared, his paths made straight. It is moreover the hour of parturition; the outcome of a national life is at hand, — miracle and prophecy and sign are to be fulfilled. The king of Israel, the son of David, is to be born, and at this point the vision of Joseph so often rejected by modern critics is the most coherent of all: "Thou shalt call his name Joshua, for he shall save his people from their sins." Here is a step forward. The salvation which the first Joshua brought to Israel was external, it was a symbol or drama; the new Joshua was to bring about the thing dramatized, deliverance from sin, or, in other words, from those violations of spiritual law which, in their outward effect, are ever turning society back into Egyptian darkness and bondage.

Thus Joseph's vision completes the prophecies and brings us to the real hope

of Israel, the final office of a divine revelator. It corresponds to the evolution of the organism. So, too, with the vision of the shepherds at Bethlehem. We have still before us the divine drama, but how wonderfully has it developed! It has followed the law of revelation. Sternly, through ages, has the flesh been chastened and subordinated to the spirit, the Psyche to the Pneuma. The outward symbol has been more and more tempered to the inward truth; miracles have been blending with special providences, and they in turn have been disclosing more of natural causation; the lens of revelation is becoming more transparent, less refractive, and, despite the hypocrisy of their leaders, the soul of the true Israel has become more spiritualized, more single of eye and pure of heart and simple of faith, more humble, too, before the Divine Word, more entirely plastic under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

We have a wonderful expression of this, in that vision of the pure virgin, oppressed by the suffering of her people, to whom there comes an angel, saying, "Fear not, Mary: thou shalt conceive and bring forth

a son, and call his name Joshua. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

Nothing, I say, could more entirely correspond to development of the Hebrew organism than such a vision. It has indeed been simulated. So the ideal reality is always simulated by the myth, the perfect type by the imperfect. Other pure virgins, whose souls were taken up with their country and their God, have fallen into ecstasies, which have proved in their smaller way prophetic. It is reasonable, it coincides with nature, that the grandest spiritual organism the world has ever seen, that of the Divine Logos itself, should, as it comes to its great birth-hour, have its pure virgin with her vision of deliverance. The Hebrew organism had ever two foci, two centres of vitality, the divine and human, these two becoming more and more interpenetrative. It corresponds to this fact that they should at last meet in one human being, and that to her who in the zenith of her holy faith says, "Behold the

handmaid of Jehovah: be it unto me according to thy word," it should be answered, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore the progeny shall be called Holy, the Son of God." Mary's vision, like that of Joseph, is true to the revelatory law.

In the Hebrew history we see that God is revealed by conditioning himself. Nay, more, in every human life God's own life is conditioned, the Logos is present,—it is the innermost centre of vitality. So it is with a man, so with a nation. When the human soul becomes conscious of its coördination with the Divine Soul, that is revelation. In the whole development of Israel we have the spectacle of the Divine Soul drawing closer to the soul of Israel, more and more deeply penetrating it, and awakening it to consciousness. The coördination is more and more complete and subtle. Now at last there comes a specific and crowning organ of The Life. Earth is ready to be fructified from above, and so heaven comes to earth. Yes, that final revelation comes in which the two foci are united under one

conscious personality. The man is now conscious of the God that is conditioned in his own existence. It is the final interpretative step. The true Joshua, who leads man into the spiritual world, must have in himself the distinct consciousness both of the human and divine. For us he spans the chasm of Infinity. Thus at the birth of Jesus the drama reaches the shore of eternity. The ORGAN of eternity appears in the world in that form best fitted to radiate forth reality, and to deliver us from the spell of worldly lives, a little babe lying in a manger. It is all a drama of the conditioned God. We have had in the Old Testament the drama of authority, law, rebellion, punishment. We come now to the drama of the Divine Personal Life. The first was the conditioned Lawgiver; now it is the conditioned Father. That is the vision of Mary and Joseph, as we analyze it; and it corresponds to such a vision that the heavens should open, and that upon the humble laboring-man there should break forth the glory and the psalmody of heaven, "Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is the Mes-

siah, the Lord." Nor could anything be more significant than the angels' song, "On earth peace in the men of his goodwill." This thought, too, is organic. Peace is not a thing that can be poured on men like water; it goes with a certain type of manhood, of which type Jesus is the stem. It is impossible not to feel the profound significance of these stories relating to the man of the Logos. The birth of Jesus is not the mere coming into the world of an individual human being; it is a revelation, — the climacteric of a revelatory and formative organism in which both the divine and human psychism had been stored up age after age for the purposes of the Holy Ghost; it is the lifting of the divine drama into its final and personal form; it is the beginning of the last revelation of God to man, and this the heart of humanity has vaguely but powerfully felt.

Detach the birth of Jesus from the dramatic organism to which it belongs, and you can do nothing with the life of Christ. You cannot explain it in isolation; you cannot coördinate it with any other environment.

This brings us to the question, Did Jesus himself understand this to be the position of affairs? His own language shows that he did, and it is at this very point that Strauss, Renan, and their followers have entirely failed to portray the real Jesus. Indeed, they did not grasp the situation themselves, for they were not true disciples of Jesus. They did not follow his teaching in regard to perception. The spirit of Christ is the clue to the mind of Christ. Nothing is clearer than that Jesus regarded himself as the child of the organism, amenable to its laws and institutions. The temple was his Father's house. He obeyed the laws, he conformed to the symbolism and to the whole institution; he directed his disciples to do the same. "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat," he said: "all things therefore, whatsoever they command you, do." He directed the leper, whom he healed, to present himself to the priest, and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded. He accepted the Hebrew Scriptures; they were his guide in the sorest temptation. He preached from them; he based his own

gospel on them; his life and death were in obedience to them, as he understood them.

Very soon, however, there developed in his life and teaching an element that appeared antagonistic to the Mosaic system. His attitude was not merely sympathetic, it was also critical. Speedily it penetrated and rejected a mass of tradition and theology which, in the thought of the Jewish leaders, was inseparable from the sacred institution. This, to a certain class of minds, seemed a menace to the whole structure; as to that structure itself, however, He was throughout profoundly reverent. This is instanced in his solemn keeping of the Passover, as a preparation for his death.

But here also, where he recognized divine authority, he distinguished sharply between form and principle, penetrating everywhere behind forms to their elemental ideas and forward to universal applications. Thus, even when he was obeying the form, his bearing, language, and personality were so full of this larger idea, so charged with the spirit of the thing, that the letter itself seemed to sink into relative

insignificance. The institution seemed to dwindle before the man. The living forces, relationships, principles of the spiritual world stood forth in relief. A mighty spirit is a great interpreter. It puts men in touch with its own inner meaning.

There is no crucible like love, and so, for the first time in the world, men began to feel the process of spiritual analysis going on spontaneously in their minds. The bondage of legality began to disappear, and that separation of organic principles from outward forms, which is one great characteristic of Christ's religion, was fast taking place. Nor did Christ interfere with it. Nay, he welcomed it. I am speaking of the process as we see it to-day in the story of the Gospels. It is this which constitutes the gospel. At every step we see this taking place. The mind and heart of Christ radiate forth the reality of things. We see that he has penetrated in every direction to the vitalities of the religion; behind that institution of legality, symbolism, sacrifice, he has perceived the true spiritual world. Behind the external law he has detected the law of the developing organism, and

that law of revelation by which the human spirit is brought into full reciprocity with God. He has pierced to the fundamental element of law and perceived it to be love. He has looked steadily at Mount Sinai, and through it to the eternal Fatherhood. He has seen that the fire was a symbol of the hot anger of love at that which destroys its own beloved, the child of its heart. He has seen the meaning of the Hebrew theocracy, and with it of all theocracies or kingdoms; has recognized that they are a temporary phase in the evolution of society, — that their final outcome must be brotherhood; the final king, a revelation of the Father, disclosing the law of the organism, which is the law of love, to the disciplined and developed human perception; so that the law is no longer the yoke of an outward statute, but the recognized necessity of the soul itself. He sees, also, that the final constraint of a God-kingdom must be, not force, but the knowledge and love of God. This is the ultimate authority; toward that sceptre all creation moves.

These ideas, and their corresponding

emotions, shine through every step of Christ's obedience to the Jewish law; they irradiate his Jewish visions, prophecies, and even his Jewish way of putting things, for the whole language of Jesus was Hebraic. He talked like a Hebrew prophet or rabbi. The Hebrew never analyzed things, he pictured them. Subordination he expressed by negation. If he wished to convey the idea that money-getting must be strictly subordinated to culture, he said, "Seek instruction and not silver." If he wished to express the supremacy of devotion in a man's life, he pictured him as meditating on God's word day and night; in other words, the truth of supremacy was presented by a picture drawn at the contrastive moment when the subordinated thing is cast aside, and that instantaneous photograph stands for the principle, the fixed choice, by which one thing is subordinated to another. This method of presentation is common to-day among relatively primitive peoples. The Jews always employed it. Sometimes it blinded them, as did the rest of their symbolism. But it was a way of showing the truth necessary to

a rudimentary nature, and Christ always taught thus in public. To the men who followed him because of the loaves and fishes he said, "Labor not for the meat that perisheth." True, he had just been giving them that meat, and certainly he did not wish them to give up their industrial habits. But it was the flashing forth of the great idea of a supreme industry, and the subordination of all other industries to it. So, also, to his disciples he said, "Resist not evil." He never meant for a moment to abrogate the right or duty of self-defense. On the contrary, at one time, when they were approaching an hour of peril, he said to his disciples, "He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one." Nor did he mean that a man was tamely to bear evil when it menaced the institutions of church or state, for with a whip of cords, and by that far more terrible constraint, the menace of his own spirit, he drove out the polluters of the temple and overturned the tables of the money-changers. Even his illustration, "If a man smite thee on one cheek, turn to him the other also," he did not literally

conform to, but, when he was illegally smitten, replied by a calm appeal to the sense of right in his adversary. Such sayings were, in short, a part of the Hebrew pictorialism; it was the natural development of a teaching that had its root in visions and symbols. The "resist not evil" was the flashing forth of the truth that there was a higher, a supreme way of overcoming evil, namely, with good, and that this was always to be put foremost, while the harsher and more violent methods were to be subordinated to it. This pictorial method often landed him, as it did other prophets and rabbis, in paradoxes, such as, "He that loseth his life shall find it." But through all this Jewish method the life of Jesus himself shone with so clear a radiance of thought, feeling, and purpose that his flashes of truth did not mislead his disciples as one might have supposed they would: here, too, the outward forms seemed to melt before the clear and steady outshining of a spiritual principle.

So, also, with regard to miracles. As a Hebrew prophet and revelator he wrought them. He conformed to the type in this

respect. Nor did he disparage miracles as signs of the Father's love and care. As symbols of the unseen coördination between God and his world, he gladly performed them. But as prodigies, standing apart from the eye of faith and from the revelatory law, he rejected them, and he sternly rebuked the tendency to crave them as a logical proof of God's power or presence. Upon spiritual souls seeking to find God, but deficient in spiritual feeling, he urged attention to his wonderful works as a means of awakening the soul to the power and love of God. "Is your heart yet hardened?" he said to his disciples who gave a hard interpretation to his teaching; "have you forgotten the miracle of the loaves?"

Yet there is no question that his whole attitude and teaching conveyed the idea that the sign was nothing to the thing signified, and that the attitude of the Jewish leaders had been perverse in refusing to receive the light, and warmth, and strength of God that shone through his mighty deeds. Having their own hearts withdrawn from God, they detached the lens

from the light, making much of it as a thing by itself, and analyzing its intellectual value as a proof.

This led them to lose absolutely the interpretative value of the miracle, and also its evolution. They clamored for a sign as a proof of his Messiahship, but they could not discern the signs of the times, namely, the development of their own organism and of its revelations to a less refractive, less psychic, and more spiritual type. The naturalism of the supernatural was becoming more and more apparent. So, also, was its causation, the power of the human life, when coördinated with God's life. Failing to penetrate the sign, the whole Pharisaic theology became false; it not only threw the aspect of anti-naturalism and arbitrariness about the entire Hebrew structure, but it absolutely failed to grasp the fact that the organism *was* a development, that God's personal love for man was really at the core of it, and that the revelation must progress from law to love. But this, to the mind of the new Joshua, was clear. The drama that began with

miracles of God's judgments must end with miracles of divine relief. Sinai, with its dramatization of God's fiery soul and of the awful distance between it and the animalized human life, must give place to a drama of reconciliation through the conditioned and sacrificed life of God. Of all this they had not the faintest inkling, any more than Nicodemus had of the law of spiritual perception by which one enters the God-realm. This made them reject the theocracy of Jesus with the utmost scorn; it filled them with supremest contempt for his simple spiritual authority, and also for the miracles of divine comfort, support, and healing by which he authenticated it. The idea of the conditioned, humanized, sacrificial life of God, descended from its throne over nature to suffer for and minister to them, did not penetrate their minds. Christ's spiritual view of the institution antagonized their material conception of it. His very name, Joshua, was a mockery to their false national hope. Theirs was not, in fact, the true Hebrew institution; it was a mechanical travesty of

it, which the hierarchy had built in their half-conscious political ambition. In this false structure form was uppermost; spirit was of small account. The inevitable result was spiritual stupidity and bondage. Naturally, every step of this true Joshua, in his large, free, significant, spiritual observance of the law, had a tendency to topple over the false system. He was, indeed, leading Israel out of the wilderness. Before such a life the spirit of the Jewish institution came irresistibly to the top. Hebraism, in the hands of Jesus, was like a burning-glass, — the sun shone through it and started a flame of love; righteousness began to be spontaneous; obedience became free; unselfishness was the highest self-interest; men gladly left all to follow Jesus, though he led them through a strait gate, for while he walked in the childish footprints of the Jewish law, the pathway was transfigured by his feet. Yet so identified in men's minds was the Hebrew institution with the theology and ecclesiasticism of the Pharisees that they failed to grasp the actual situation. When ecclesiasticism tottered, they thought it

was divine revelation which was about to fall; when forms relaxed their grasp, they thought it was the moral law which was weakening; when love came to the front, they imagined that justice and punishment were passing by. The rise of liberty signified to them the end of accountability. This led Jesus to define his position. He was not so concerned for his enemies as for his own disciples, lest their consciences should be blunted by this conception of things. Therefore he took pains at an early period, when his popularity was at its height, to call his disciples apart and make them a formal address, in which he sketched, after his pictorial fashion, the spiritual form that the theocracy was to assume under his reign; he pictured its happiness as springing from a penitent, purified, and spiritualized moral nature. "Think not," said he, "that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." Now, from his illustrations and his position in regard to the supernatural, already considered, it is plain that he meant such a fulfillment as we see constantly going on in nature.

Nature's method of fulfillment is the organic. The law and the prophets constituted, as we have already seen, a natural organism of God. It was interpretative. It was the crowning revelatory organism of the world, the last step in the coördinating process by which God revealed himself. But this revelatory function was inseparable from the process of purification and spiritualization, since the human soul itself was both eye and object-glass, and the human conscience was, so to speak, the optic focus; therefore the Hebrew organism was the matrix for a spiritual type of conscience, a holy manhood corresponding to God. So, when Jesus said that he came to fulfill, he meant that he was to be the new and final organ of revelation and righteousness, — a stem coming out of the Hebrew plant to take up into itself and complete the spiritualizing process, bringing it ultimate fruition in his own life. This is the only intelligible view of his meaning, the only one that agrees with all his utterances and with the facts in the case. The old theological notion, that he fulfilled the law for

us as a substitute, is positively antagonistic, not only to the moral nature, but to the general tenor of Christ's teaching, and particularly to such expressions as immediately follow his statement. But the conception of an organic fulfillment fits the exact situation; the apparent antagonism of Jesus to the law and the prophets was precisely of the kind that appears to take place in nature at the beginning of any new stage of development. The new organ is, at first, a continuation of the old; the stem is, at first, hardly differentiated from the root. Moreover, it has in it precisely the same forces, and it is subordinated to the root and dependent upon it for sustenance; but very soon it appears that the forces are being newly centred, and the whole structure materially modified and irresistibly carried upward to a new method of coördination with the air and sunlight, while at the same time there remains a reciprocity with the old structure. It was in this sense, unquestionably, that we must understand that saying, "Truly, I say, not one jot or tittle of the law shall pass till all be fulfilled."

Here we have Nature's own inflexible position, — reasonable and beneficent, too, as Nature herself. Not one cotyledon of the tiny beech can be permitted to fall away, without Nature's penalty, until the above-ground stem and leaves have formed. So with that ancient organism by which the human conscience was coördinated with God; there is no section of it but represents some spiritual force or necessity. Not one tittle, therefore, could be discarded until the new organism had been formed, and even then only by those moral natures that had been lifted up and coördinated with the new organism. Theocracies, legalities, ceremonials, harsh penalties, terrible judgments must still remain a necessary matrix of the moral nature for individuals or communities who have not attained to coördination with the final stem of revelation and righteousness. All church history bears witness to this; nay, the history of the individual soul reveals the same law.

Indeed, Jesus proceeds to describe one of the great effects of Christianity in its retroactive aspect. This higher revelatory

organism, he declares, is going to bring out the real significance of law. As the organic force develops in Christ's kingdom, it will illuminate the structure, it will define relationships; where Christ is felt God's law must appear to be, what it really is, no arbitrary or mechanical bondage imposed on man, but the law of our own nature: its demands are those of the spiritual forces and correspondences inherent in our structure; its penalties are the inevitable results of their violation. The structure is abused, and thus turned into an instrument of pain. The judgments of the law are these same pains which follow its violation, and, as always in nature, the demands, warnings, and penalties extend to the innermost part of the structure. Furthermore, viewing the life of Jesus, we perceive the organic force to be love, which is natural reciprocity of spiritual affection. It means genuine sonship to God and brotherhood to man. The demands of the law, therefore, correspond to the organic force, and, as it is always with natural law, even a minute departure must bring upon

us both judgment and penalty. We are no longer in a semi-organized molluscous condition. Those who know Christ are sensibly coördinated with the spiritual world and penetrated by its life. The higher the organism, the more exact is the law; the more a body is penetrated by vitality, so much the more searching is the organic demand, so much the quicker and more frequently does the structure have to settle its account with law. There is a tribunal and a penalty for the smallest transgression; and this result, which everywhere attends organic progress, will, so Jesus declared, attend *his* fulfillment of the law. "Ye have heard that it was said to them of *old time*, Ye shall not kill, and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the lower criminal court; but I say unto *you*, That every one who is angry with his brother shall be accountable to the lower court; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be accountable to the Sanhedrim; and whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of the extreme sentence of the law, having his body cast

into the burning valley of Hinnom with the worst malefactors. If, therefore, thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way. First be reconciled with thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Reconciliation is the path of righteousness. Fatherhood, sonship, brotherhood, these are the organic laws, and the least infraction of them is a crime for which no external service can atone. The Hebrew police court, the Sanhedrim, the execution of the criminal, and the burning of his body in the valley of Hinnom, are but outward expressions of that irreversible law of the moral organism which Jesus himself, by his very fulfillment of the law, must necessarily illuminate.

Indeed, Jesus always declared that, as the final organism of law, he had the retroactive work of law to fulfill; that he who was the stem of righteousness, of love, of brotherhood, must also be the stem of judgment. To sum up matters, he fulfilled the law by becoming himself the perfect outcome of the Hebrew organism.

In him there was a perfect conservation of forces; by him all those forces and vitalities were carried up into an embodiment that gave them universal correspondence and coördination with all men. So that in his gospel there is not only a perfect, complete, and spiritual revelation of God, but a potential coördination of the sinful, undeveloped human life with God; a new matrix of the human conscience; a new lens for the spiritual eye, taking the place of legality, of the ceremonial yoke, of the dramatic judgments. And the essential force in this new organism is the conditioned life of God, suffering under the sin of humanity, and so revealing upon the cross in human form the love of the Eternal Father, which is the real cause of all the laws he lays upon us, and of all the penalties he inflicts. This phase of fulfillment, in which the revelation of divine sacrifice takes the place of penalty and legality as a matrix for the conscience, appears in the last supper of Jesus with his disciples. There he significantly holds up the Passover, which represented the whole system of legality, symbolism, and organic

mediation, as corresponding to himself. His broken body and shed blood are to be its fulfillment.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE RESURRECTION.

The only natural immortality for man.

God and the human soul are the two foci of the Scripture revelation. It could not be otherwise, for God is knowable to us only in his relation to our own faculties. Every step in the knowledge of God presupposes a step in the knowledge of ourselves. Necessarily, therefore, the human soul occupies the foreground of the Bible. Beginning with that ancient vision wherein we are told that the first man developed into a living soul by sharing the breath of God's life, there is a continuous series of visions and revelatory institutions by which an ever-increasing light is thrown upon this same living soul. But this it is which is the theme of *all* great revelators, poets, prophets, and oracles; for all the questions of divinity, of soul-culture, of morals, of social development, hang upon

it. If an organism is related only to the soil beneath the sod, then it requires only subterranean culture; if, like the kernel of corn, it is related to the upper air, then its culture should be regulated largely with reference to this fact. So, if the soul of man has correspondences to the supernatural world, it must be cultivated with reference to those correspondences.

It is absurd to talk of the uselessness of theology. Theology is simply an investigation into our higher relationships, and the laws that grow out of them; and in all ages men have been unable to rid themselves of the impression that they had a kinship with the supernatural. This is not due to superstition, but to sensibility. The profoundest natures have intuitively felt certain supernatural elements within them. These elements have stood together in a kind of rational unity, furnishing an internal evidence. By the highest and most trustworthy sensibilities within them, men have felt the divine life in nature brooding over them. By those same sensibilities they have felt their relation to the divine. Hence have sprung theology,

and religion; visions of God, and of the soul-culture necessitated by our relation to Him. The visions have been distorted, because the sensibility was impure, sporadic, undeveloped; hence the inductions were imperfect. This result was increased by the fact that the reasoning powers were untrained; hence came superstitions. The light was feeble; it had a short radius; and superstitions are the shadows that hang about the penumbra of our light: but in the midst of all these vagaries certain distinct features stand forth, such as our kinship with the divine, the immortality of the soul, also the necessity and glory of sacrifice. The life that sacrificed itself to the gods or the fatherland was heroic, divine.

To the Hebrews, and also to the Greeks, the soul or Psyche was, as has been pointed out, the sensuous animating life, but their notion of it was rather vague: they never sharply differentiated it from the spirit; nor had they ever, like our modern scientists, discerned its precise relation to nature as the organic force. They did not therefore perceive its in-

herent relationship to matter, even although they saw it to be physical life; nor did they seize the correlative fact that matter is organized by life, and that by consequence the two constitute a natural unity: they saw that the body perished, that the life had in itself eternal spiritual qualities and relationships; furthermore, they could not draw the line between life and spirit. They therefore conceived of the life, with its spiritual attributes, as surviving after death. At first their conception of the surviving soul was not that of a purely immaterial existence; it was rather gaseous than immaterial, — a subtle element like a breath. They were unable to disassociate it in their mind from bodily organs, but those organs were phantasms, without weight, force, or indeed any of the qualities of matter; they could not embrace nor be embraced. That organic quality of the soul which enables it to enjoy and act upon the material universe was forever gone. Therefore the life itself was gone; the dear one who died had practically perished; for him the sweetness, the melody, and the glory of the

physical universe were ended. Not only that, but he was forever lost to his friends; for, granted that the mind is the highest and noblest part of us, still it is through the warm, vivid, forceful physical life that the mind is radiated to us. That is the logos, the medium of contact. Take away that vital element, and the noblest personality has small effect upon us. For it must be remembered that this physical life, this organic element, is also the sensuous and the psychic, the seat of the natural affections. It is by this that human beings are put in touch with one another. It is the foundation of social life and of social evolution. It is the root of all fatherhood, motherhood, sisterhood, brotherhood, — of all filial feeling and human sympathy. Take this away, and the mother, the child, the friend, are ours no longer, for we can no longer feel them; the coördinating element is lost. Such an immortality is not real, and this fact the ancients themselves fully recognized. They conceived of the *gods* as possessing bodies, and as rejoicing in eternal physical force; and the hero who was especially

dear to the gods was himself translated into a god, and shared that physical immortality. But such an august experience was not for the common mortal; hence the despair of the ancients at the death of a beloved one. We see it portrayed in the pages of Virgil and Homer, and on the inscriptions of their tombs.

The Egyptians, it is true, conceived of an ultimate restoration of the body; but as the process was liable to all kinds of petty accidents, the consolation was dubious. The Jews caught glimpses in their Scriptures which led them to believe in a bodily resurrection, but their notion of it was so mechanical as to be absurd. Indeed, the intellectual Sadducees rejected it. As the Greeks advanced in intellectuality, the transcendent qualities of the human mind became so apparent to them that their great philosophers fancied it to be a distinct entity, wholly separable from the sensuous life. They conceived of mind as a purely immaterial element, capable of existing by itself, and even antagonistic to matter. However, for this position they had small evidence:

it was based upon a deductive philosophy which we to-day regard as unsound; nevertheless their greatest philosophers believed in it, and fancied that they could enjoy such an existence even better than the present, and nothing can be more pathetic than the attempt of Socrates to remove the fears of his disciples by convincing their minds in regard to the reality and sufficiency of a thing against which their innate organic life protested. There is no question that Socrates was right as regards the testimony of man's soul to its own divine relationship, and also to the transcendent value of the mind or spirit. But the testimony of the soul is equally strong as regards the inseparability of the spirit from the psychical or organic life, nor has there ever been one particle of evidence for such a separation. Between these two testimonies, therefore, we are driven to a hypothesis that includes both.

Now the most glorious fact about Christ is that he fulfilled all revelations, oracles, myths, and expectations concerning the human soul. He brought out the truth of

which they were all shadows ; as Paul expressed it, " he brought life and immortality to light." This he did by actual experiment. He took the human soul, the sensuous life, the psychic organic element, and bore it about in his own person. He lifted it out of the mire of sensuality, and showed by his own life what it really was, — a word of the living God, a seed-vessel of the supernatural world, a radiating medium for the eternal life. Its suffering and sacrifice even unto blood he showed to be the mediatorial element, for by it he put men in touch with God, and made them feel their natural relationship to God. Having thus shown that the Psyche *was* the element of mediation or coördination between heaven and earth, and between men themselves ; having shown that it was the foundation of moral law, and of social as well as spiritual evolution, — he then proceeded to lay down the principle for its development: he that loseth his Psyche shall find it, or in other words, discover its divine relationships and hidden potencies. And this principle he demonstrated, for he presented his psychic nature, with all

its energies conserved, to the Divine Spirit. So great was his conquest over the Psyche that it was said "he offered himself without spot to God," and "he poured out his soul even unto death." As a result, all the vast occult potencies of the Psyche were unlocked, and divine wonders occurred, such as the darkened occultism of all ages has but dimly hinted at; for the occultism of Jesus was possessed by the Holy Ghost. All its wonders stand together in a rational unity, constituting a drama of the soul's relationship to the Father. Nor was this all. Standing in the light of God as revealed through nature, Jesus perceived what the soul really was, — not a thing, even in its most transcendent development, to be separated from physical existence, but an eternal organic force. He saw that if a man died his Psyche was like a corn of wheat falling into the ground. In the very process of death, provided that death was a surrender to the Divine Spirit, the Psyche would be gathering new organic energies, and would soon, like the corn of wheat, clothe itself with a new body. Thus, in-

stead of turning into a separate immaterial existence, and becoming, what it never had been, a thing isolated from the physical universe, it would develop onward, by a natural metamorphosis, toward a higher form of organic life in a perfect unity with nature. As it had originally risen from the ground, like all other forms of life, so it would again rise from the tomb. This is the Christian doctrine of the resurrection.

It is curious to see how nearly modern science has approached its underlying principle, for to-day the whole tendency of scientific thought is not toward Aristotle's position that the soul is absolutely immaterial and separable from matter, but that it is a kind of life developed through lower organisms and never disassociated from matter, and that its sensibility is the beginning of social and moral evolution. Indeed, it is an amazing thing that many intellectual people scoff at the idea of a physical resurrection, as being a miracle contrary to the uniformity of nature; while they avow their belief in an immaterial immortality, a thing to which the whole

testimony of nature and modern science is opposed, and for which there is not a shred of external evidence. The story of the resurrection of Jesus, as told by the evangelists, is somewhat confused in its details, as one might expect under such overwhelming circumstances. The witnesses were bewildered, and they did not see how things stood together; but, taking the point of view maintained from the beginning in this book, everything becomes clear. Jesus was the outcome of the specific organism of revelation. He was the man of the Logos. There was in him an age-long conservation of psychic energy. He was, moreover, by his own will a spotless and perfect organ of the Divine Spirit, and *the* organ of spiritual vitality, life and resurrection for us all. "I am the Resurrection and the Life," he said. He predicted that his body would not remain in the tomb. Had it remained there the authorities would have confronted the Christians with it. The life returned to it, reanimated it, working at the very first only slight changes in it, so that his disciples were, after a little, able to recognize it. Thus

his physical organism continued a perfect medium for the radiation of his spirit. It put his friends in touch with him to the last, but was gradually metamorphosed by the great psychic law of subordination to the spirit, until it ascended into the heavens. Metamorphosis is one of the great facts of physical life by which progress is made from lower to higher forms of vitality. Spiritual metamorphosis is the teaching of the resurrection. This was the light of joy that burst upon the heathen world with the gospel. The human life itself was to rise again through Christ. The lost dear ones were to be restored to sense and touch as Jesus was. There is in this an inherent probability. It is in accordance with the uniformity of nature and the law of evolution. An immaterial immortality is actually more opposed to evolution and to the uniformity of nature than a miracle would be, and, as has been said, there is not one shred of external evidence in its favor. Even the philosophy on which it rests is hopelessly confused, and opposed to modern psychology. Yet it will be a herculean

task to make men see the thought of Jesus, so entirely have the older theologians covered it up with the philosophy of the Greeks and schoolmen.

Paul, however, understood it; *his* conception was naturalistic. In his first letter to the Corinthian church he defines the doctrine of the resurrection as he had been in the habit of presenting it. He takes up the current objection of his day to a bodily resurrection. "How are the dead raised, and with what body do they come?" "Thou fool," he says, "this thing is transpiring before you in nature; it is analogous to the sowing of a seed." Here the apostle is singularly true to life, for the sowing of a seed is the cultivation of an underground organ with reference to its resurrection as an aerial organ. But he goes on: "Thou sowest not the body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain," yet each kind has its own resurrection body organized by its own life. Organized matter is not all of the same type; even here in this world there is more than one kind of flesh, more than one variety of matter, arranged

by life. So likewise in God's universe there is a psychic body organized by the animal life, and there is also a celestial body, a subtler organic product, organized by the spiritualized life.

This accords, he avers, with the Scripture. "The first type-man developed into a living Psyche; the last type-man developed into a life-giving spirit." The ordinary corruptible flesh and blood, tainted by the degeneracies of the Psyche, is not able to inherit the kingdom of God. Man's body, like his soul, must be developed and reorganized by the spiritual vitality of the Christ. This must be effected by the coördination of the life with Christ's life, and the subjection of it to Christ's law. If our culture in this world corresponds to Christ's, we shall be like him. "If we be planted in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." If our life, which is the organic principle of our bodies, takes on the semblance and type of Christ's sacrificial life, then by the universal law of nature our bodies must undergo a spiritual metamorphosis after death. We shall bear the

image of the heavenly. Death will be swallowed up in victory. Nothing could be more naturalistic than this conception; but, unless we grasp Paul's evolutionary idea of a human life developing from the Psyche to the organic or life-giving Pneuma, we are entirely at sea in regard to his views of the resurrection. On no other interpretation can his language be explained; but while he conceives of the resurrection after this naturalistic fashion, it is nevertheless to his mind a supernatural event, an act of God's sovereign will more majestic than any miracle. This, however, is because Paul, like Jesus, regarded nature itself as supernatural. Thus, to his mind, all nature's resurrections are the work of God. Even when the seed puts forth its new body, it is a divine act. "God giveth it a body," he says, "and to every seed its own body."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CHRIST UNIVERSE.

We have considered Christ's teachings with regard to the law, source, stem, and kingdom of righteousness; also in regard to the knowledge of God, the laws of perception and revelation, and finally the specific organism of revelation.

As we have progressed, it has become more and more evident that all Christ's teachings on these points stand together in one consistent idea of the supernatural. Futhermore, this conception of the supernatural is that of a power correlated throughout with the material world, and more and more perfectly to be revealed in it by a progressive series of organic coördinations. In other words, Christ's life and teaching point to a certain definite structure of the universe. In his celebrated Romanes address, Mr. Huxley speaks of this problem of the universe as yet un-

solved. He mentions the attempts that have been made at its solution, including Buddha's, whose theory seems to him the cleverest, but he entirely ignores Jesus. Probably this is due to the fact that Jesus did not solve the problem as a scientist or philosopher would. His immediate object was not to give men a theory or a dogma, or even to exploit the facts of the universe, but to develop perception. This he did by laying hold of the human life, focalizing it, purifying it, and bringing out its inherent correspondences with the spiritual world. This last he accomplished by extending the divine visions, and fulfilling the drama of the Old Testament organism. Thus, by clear, practical interpretative visions of heaven, he awoke the latent kinship with heaven. But his visions were not panoramic; they were subordinated to the end in view. They shone directly upon the path of spiritual progress, they illuminated the next step. Thus, too, by vivid glimpses of a false supernaturalism, he drew men back from following it. But it was impossible to advance in the life of Christ without gaining steadily in co-

herent perception. Impossible also was it to contemplate such suggestive visions or teachings as his, without recognizing their innate coherence and application; and so it came to pass that, face to face with the advancing life of Christianity, there loomed up before the minds of its leaders, like John and Paul, the gigantic outlines of a Christ universe, — a universe that must continue to grow as the Christian life grows, for life is itself perceptive.

It is, moreover, quite practicable to construct this Christ universe in its great outlines; for it is all contained in Christ's idea that man is the son of God, or the supernatural in embryo.

This is the germ from which the whole of Christianity is developed. The instant we take our position outside of it, we are outside of Christianity, and are in fact anti-Christian. It is the one intellectual point in regard to which Christianity can make no concession. In all his teaching Jesus was strictly consistent with it, nor did he shrink from applying its uttermost logical conclusions to nature and the Scriptures. For instance, when the Phar-

isees accused him of blaspheming because he said he was the Son of God, he quoted that passage in the Old Testament, "I have said ye are gods." "If," said Jesus, "He called them gods to whom the Word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken, say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because he said, I am the Son of God?" In other words, Jesus accepts it as an immutable principle of the Scripture and of nature, that those to whom the word of God came belonged to the same category with God; this applied even to such crude kind of manhood as the ancient Israel; therefore, *a fortiori*, it applied to the Divine Organ SPECIFICALLY selected. Then, again, when the Sadducees challenged him to furnish proof of the resurrection from the Old Testament, Jesus simply quoted that passage, "I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob." "God is not the God of the dead," he added, "but of the living." In other words, to be a man's God is to be in living reciprocity with him. The two must stand together in one vital element, or they could

not exercise such a reciprocity. If after a man's death Jehovah could still say, I am his God, that certified that the man was sharing God's eternity. Death must therefore mean the progress, not the cessation, of human life: it is one of those metamorphoses by which an embryo advances toward its completer stage, — this, in man's case, being a stage of more perfect correspondence to God.

In fact, Jesus proceeds to assert this; for, the Sadducees having brought up a resurrection problem in the case of a man with seven wives, and challenged him to show how that status could be made to harmonize with the heavenly world, Jesus declares that the resurrection state is not a physical repetition of this, but an emergence from embryonic conditions, such as sex, into complete life. They shall be equal with the angels, he declares. The word "angel" was somewhat vague, but it certainly stood for a perfected spiritual existence, and as a matter of fact it did to some extent define that existence; for it meant literally "a messenger," and is applied in the gospels to any personal agent

of communication. For example, it is said that John the Baptist sent angels to Jesus. The holy angels, or messengers of God, were always the personal organs of the Divine Word. The saying of Jesus, therefore, that man in his complete estate is to be equal to the messengers of the Word, implies necessarily that man is now an undeveloped organ of that same Word, an embryo spirit. By fixing our eye, then, like Jesus, upon these two centres of the universe, upon God the Infinite Spirit and upon man the embryo spirit, we can best understand its structure and movement. Plainly, God and man correspond to one another, and all the cosmic movements and facts must relate to the spiritual development of the embryo, and particularly to the increase of its correspondence to God.

This is the case in the material world; everything is coördinated with, moves with the embryo, carrying it forward into correspondence with its type and central organ, whether it be the germ of a planet or of an orange. It is true that not all oranges are in the germinating stage at once, but the

germinating movement represents nature as a whole. Nature is everywhere germinating, advancing to complete stages, and then perishing, only to be reproduced through death, and to complete the same circle again. In man, however, we find, according to Christ, a permanent issue of this cosmic movement, an embryo of spiritual life, an heir of eternity, a true finality. It was with perfect reason, therefore, that Jesus pictured the cosmic process as corresponding to him, and a glance at the Gospels shows that this is always the position of Jesus. The world, according to him, moves with man's moral progress; develops in divine significance as man develops in divine likeness; shares man's spiritual crises, his judgment, and his metamorphosis, — not because of any partiality for man, but because man is a spiritual embryo and the law of the cosmos is the development of spiritual life. It is reasonable, therefore, that we should, like Jesus, argue from the embryo to the laws and facts of the cosmos. I do not mean that one is to build up the cosmos deductively by such a process alone, but that it furnishes us a

standard by which to test spiritual visions. We decide the question, for example, whether we have seen a reality, or encountered an optical illusion, by putting to ourselves that other question, Does it stand together with known facts? In declaring the law of the universe to be spiritual law, and that law to be the development of the embryo spirit, Jesus has given us a solid basis, because it stands together with what we already know, and the inevitable deductions from it stand together with the facts of his spiritual vision which are disclosed in the New Testament.

Let us then, for a moment, study the embryo, with the idea of getting a firmer grasp on two things: 1st. What is the supernatural? 2d. What are the conditions of development for the embryo?

1st. What is the supernatural? Obviously we must give it a broader meaning than it has had hitherto. We must make it include certain powers that are germinant in man; we must recognize more practically the fact presented by Jesus and his disciples, that the supernatural and spiritual are the same thing; we

must acknowledge, as Jesus did, that the divine in man is not a figure of speech, but an actuality. At the same time we must distinguish sharply between God the Father and man the child, — between the self-existent Fount of supernatural life and an embryo supernatural whose spiritual life and development depend on constant coördination with God's life (even as the branch can bring forth fruit only as it abides in the vine). Then we must recognize another fact,— that a spirit is not solely an immaterial force; quite the contrary. The first thing that strikes us, as we study man's life, is its *organic* quality. Human life is *immanent* in matter: it resides in organs and exercises its vitalities through them; it is constitutionally adapted to this mode of existence. Indeed, the perfect correspondence between matter and life — the naturalness, for instance, with which life lays hold of matter, blends with it, builds it up into organic structures, vitalizes it, and radiates through it — is the wonder of the universe. True, it may be said that it is the lower and psychic life which has this constitutional relationship

to the material world, and that the more transcendental spirit is antagonistic to matter, and pants to be free from it. But no human spirit, not even the greatest and holiest, ever developed or existed, save as an organic life.

Doubtless it is the spirit that constitutes the supernatural in us, but it is impossible to separate the spirit from that class of powers, inherent in the Logos or Psyche, through which the spirit develops, becomes creative and exercises dominion over the physical realm. Indeed, it is this power of the Word, this power to create and rule, which, according to the book of Genesis and human consciousness generally, makes man the image of God. Strip GOD of the *Logos* and he is no longer the Creator, the Upholder and the Sovereign of the world; he is not the Living God; he has nothing to do with practical life; he dwells apart in a perpetual Nirvana. It is the Logos that makes him our God. It is the subordination of the Psyche to the spirit that makes him the fount of virtue. In short, the parental and the embryo life correspond.

The embryo also is both spirit and logos, and has always this constitutional relationship to matter.

It is true we must draw a distinction here; it is not necessary to our conception of a spirit that it should be embodied, as man is, in the sense of being bound to a certain set of vital organs. Certainly this is not the case with God. The much-talked-of divine immanence does not mean that God is so limited to his universe as to be necessitated by it, or to necessitate it, any further than he chooses. There is in God's vitality no subliminal or necessitated region. His relation to matter is free throughout; at least such is the teaching of Christ. He is not compelled, Christ tells us, to proceed according to law. With him all things are possible. His limitations correspond to man's, but they are by his own choice. He is able out of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. He is able anywhere to embody himself or not, as he will, — to organize and vitalize matter as he will. Matter is, in fact, the natural outcome, creation, expression of the Logos. It is quite con-

ceivable, therefore, that, in the progress of the embryo supernatural, it should so far reach correspondence with God as to be perfectly free; having a natural relation to matter, and a natural power for organizing it and inhabiting it, without being its prisoner. There may be, in fact, as Jesus certainly seemed to imply, an order of spirits that are able to enter into and possess other bodies than their own; there may be, as the visions of Jesus and of the prophets represent, angels that are able to effect mighty changes in matter, to bring about vast coördinations, and to embody themselves in human form. For instance, it is not unreasonable that a spirit, in a more advanced stage of development than man, should have appeared to Jesus in the wilderness and ministered to his physical necessities; or that an angel should have rolled away the door of the sepulchre, or, for that matter, that the angel of the Lord should have done any of those wonders recorded in the Old Testament. It is simply a question of what constitutes the supernatural. If we accept Christ's teaching that man is the embryo supernatural, and

if development means development in organic power, and in correspondence to God, and in power to be God's messenger, then it is clear that the supernatural is a personal organic Force, perfectly related to nature, adapted to organizing it, residing in it, penetrating it, and coördinating its forces *ad infinitum* for the purposes of spiritual manifestation.

It is perfectly natural, that is, perfectly in accordance with the structure of such a universe, that God should work a miracle if there were occasion for it; if, in other words, it were important to the spiritual manifestation of himself, or to the increased correspondence of man to God. And it is entirely in accord with the structure of the universe that there should be free spirits or organic powers, completely developed organs of God's Logos, capable of such large coördinations and free embodiments as are some day to be within our own power, when *we* shall be "equal with the angels." Much misconception of the supernatural has been caused by our failure clearly to identify it with the spirit, and to see that the spirit necessarily in-

cluded the Logos or Psyche, and that through this latter power it is eternally related to matter; in fact, that matter itself is not that crude thing that we have conceived it to be, but something infinitely subtle, infinitely plastic, progressive, and capable of spiritualization, or transfusion with spiritual force, and, in many myriads of its qualities and aspects, invisible and intangible to us. In fact we look out upon matter through the narrow loop-holes of a few organs, and catch but an exceeding few of its infinite vibrations. Myriads of spirits clothed in celestial bodies might crowd round about us, and even touch us, without our once perceiving their presence; they might wield the mightiest of material forces in our behalf, and yet we not know it, so little of this infinitely varied and subtle thing called matter are we able to detect with our present organs. Could those organs for one moment be supplemented, the world of matter would be vastly changed to us; perchance "the whole mount would be full of horses and chariots of fire round about."

Again, taking this relationship of the

supernatural to matter, and the perfect correspondence of matter to it, it is not difficult to see why Christ should say, "In my Father's house are many mansions;" nor why he should speak of Paradise, or of the presence of God and of the holy angels, or of ascending to heaven. While it is true that, in the strictest sense of the word, the supernatural or heavenly world is simply the spiritual life, it is just as true, according to Christ, that the progress of the material universe corresponds to the development of the spiritual embryo. The world of the mastodon corresponded to the mastodon. Man's world corresponds to man. The planet Mars corresponds to whatever existence may be on it. Although this is one universe developing in unity, there are yet, even in this world, different stages of development, with different environments corresponding to them. Why should there not be in God's world a heaven of heavens, corresponding in its environment to those glorified and perfected spirits who have trod faithfully the pathway of spiritual development until they have become godlike? And if the

pathway of spiritual development be a matter of choice, and degenerate evolution a possibility, why should there not be, such as Christ implied, fallen and wicked spirits, who kept not even "their first estate," the conditions to which they had already attained, who preferred the coarser psychic, passional uses of matter, the immanent to the transcendent joys, and who, thus degrading themselves, have sunk into passional organic powers, — gods of this world, radiating a subtle animalism, generating a magnetic field in which not only wicked spirits but wicked men and women, and brutes, yea, even swine, stand together and are coördinated? May it not be? Certainly it is quite in accordance with the nature of things that there should be a supernatural kingdom of darkness, as Christ taught, a kingdom of Satan, or of the Evil One. For, as has already been seen, one of the most striking characteristics of the human spirit is its power to radiate through the logos or Psyche a life-force or Pneuma that combines in itself the subtle elements of the transcendent spirit and the magnetic word. Thus

the human spirit has what we call a sphere of influence. We see grand passional personalities who hold within the radius of their projected life multitudes of human satellites, — nay, imperial spirits there are who thus create and rule empires. Multitudes sit together in the magnetic sphere of one man's Pneuma; for example, all the individualities, facts, and forces of France for a generation were thus coördinated, erected into a dominion, and carried forward by the Pneuma of Napoleon.

This is what Christ calls "being in a person." It applies to all personality. He declares *himself* to be in the Father, that is, in the sphere of the Father's spirit, in the current of his personal influence. He commands his disciples, "Abide in me," with the same significance. Those who abide in him are a unity, a kingdom; the members are organs of Christ. As the apostle says, they all drink of his spirit, they share his vitalities. This is what the apostles mean by "being in Christ." The spirit of a person constituted, to their minds, not merely a radiated force, but a vital element, like air or light, a super-

natural heaven in which a sovereign personality reigned. Thus the apostle speaks of the Prince of the power of the ether, or lower atmosphere, taking the Greek word for the coarser element as the type of a coarser personal atmosphere. So, too, the apostle speaks of the whole world as lying in the wicked one, that is, human society in his day was passively given over to the influence, and so lay helplessly in the sphere, of a wicked spiritual force. The radiated spirit of man is aggressive, it is charged not only with active germs of thought, but also with sensibility, — often with passion, whose vibrations pass through other souls like shocks of electricity. Some personalities are contagious; one can scarce escape being carried into their magnetic field. Some are coarsely yet powerfully attractive, like human loadstones; they drag one as with chains of darkness against the force of conscience and will; they cast about the soul unholy shadows; they shut out the all-environing light of God, the pure and all-embracing atmosphere of his Spirit. To be attacked by such a force, em-

bodying itself through a human form, through some symbol of nature, some environment, significant of animal passion, — *that* is temptation. Its external form may be physical, its spell is supernatural and spiritual. To enter into temptation is to advance within that terrible sphere. We wrong the creation of God, we do injustice to the animal world, nay, we are absolutely unphilosophic, when we attribute our sins altogether to the body, our perversities to matter, and our lust to the brute that preceded us. Animals have strong, healthy appetites, but they are more subservient than we are to the law of their structure. They are free from excessive lust, avarice, or designing malice. These characteristics demand the creative imagination of the Spirit. Temptation is a spiritual, not a material, product. And this is the real significance of Christ's teaching concerning evil spirits. To sum up matters, we see that the visions and teachings of Jesus concerning the supernatural world are perfectly coherent. They stand together with his entirely reasonable position that man is the supernatural embryo.

We come now to the second point, the conditions for the evolution of the embryo; and here we see the meaning of the otherwise inexplicable cycle of the cosmos, a cycle which is well represented, as Mr. Huxley has said, by the bean-stalk, which develops out of the earth from its seed, only to drop another seed which shall in its turn develop another bean-stalk. Through vast ages a globe of matter is evolved, which, after other long ages, gives birth to vegetative life, which issues into animal life, which issues into human life, which in its turn, after untold suffering and struggle, reproduces itself and then turns to dust; an interminable cycle of development, of survival through a battle for existence, and of death. But if we take man to be what Christ out of his own consciousness testified him to be, the embryo supernatural, then at this point the cosmic process issues in something. Here we have an end worth interminable cycles, whatever their sufferings, struggles, or cataclysms; for in each member of the human race we have a seed of glory and immortality, which may be so fructified from

above as to become both a son and heir of God. Then, as already indicated, matter, instead of being that coarse and anti-spiritual substance that we have conceived it to be, is the matrix of the developing spirit, penetrable in its every atom by the Divine Logos. Ground up by ocean and by glacier, worked over by the earth-worm, elaborated by plant-life, it is carried up thus into subtler forms, until it is adapted to the organic force of the human spirit; then we give it the name of "food." A wonderful, subtle thing it is, as we see it thus filled with vital adaptations, hanging upon a peach or apple bough, or swaying on the end of a wheat-stalk. Taken by man into his body, it furnishes a matrix first of all for his organic force, then for his mechanical. It accompanies the human spirit in its upward progress, taking on finer and subtler forms, the tissue of the thinking brain, the nerve and pupil of the sparkling eye. It generates nerve force, becomes the subtle vehicle of emotion and of speech.

Then, as it accompanies the organic life upward from the earth-worm to the man,

it becomes not only the matrix of organic but of spiritual life, — bread of heaven, Jesus called it, for it is the vehicle of heavenly vitalities.

Thus a great soul, a true revelator, not only furnishes in his own personal embodiment bread that comes down from heaven, but he creates a heavenly world, full of spiritual sustenance and stimulus to other men, — a city of God full of divine glory and everlasting joy, an extension of Paradise. Thus we have in the process of evolution two great movements. First, the cosmic, of which scientists tell us, developing in long cycles, only to perish. Yet in all this bean-stalk cosmic cycle there is one permanent, progressive movement. There is a better matrix being formed for the embryo spirit; more soil worked over by earth-worms and by vegetative life; better methods of cultivation, better human bodies, better organic force in those bodies, better human stock every way; wider and better unities, social and civic; better knowledge by the human race of itself, better possession of itself and its own great race organs through historic science, closer

material coördination by railroads and electricity; more stock out of which to make mind and spirit food, so that the individual human life finds itself continually with a better outfit at the start in the direction of spiritual development. And particularly has the individual life of today a much wider chance to become an organ of humanity. Matter has become more and more a medium of reciprocity; it tends more and more toward the solidarity of one embryo with another.

Furthermore, as we look back, we see at the first stage in human development, when the thing was fairly feasible, when there was a sufficient matrix and sufficient coördination of the race to make it practical, we see the Christ life, the spiritual man, the perfect revelator, the complete embodiment of the Divine Fatherhood, of human brotherhood, and of man's sonship; son of God, therefore, and son of man, representing in himself the root, stem, and terminal bud of our corporate spiritual life. Moving steadfastly in accordance with the law of spiritual evolution, he becomes, as Paul calls him, a life-giving

spirit; he conquers in himself the tendency of the animal man to selfish individualism; vanquishes the animal preference for the sensual cosmos, or present world; conquers the prince of this world, that is, the spiritual tempter through whose suggestions and coördinations the perishable cosmos allures or terrorizes us; overcomes our antagonism to the divine will by the superhuman revelation of the divine love in his sufferings and death; attains to the perfected spiritual body of humanity, and so through the power of that supernatural organism ascends to the throne of God, to the higher realm of spiritualized matter, there to prepare a place for us, while at the same time he holds subtle contact with us through his organic vitality.

We find, in brief, that the first condition for the development of the spiritual embryo is a progressive physical matrix penetrable by spiritual forces.

The second condition is a stem or series of stems for specific coördination with the spiritual world; and as we take in this fact we see what is meant by "mediation," and

also by "the fall of man." The latter conception is thought to be antagonistic to evolution. That depends on what is meant by it. If by it is meant an evolution of the race altogether downward, then it certainly is antagonistic, not only to evolution but to fact. If, on the other hand, it means that there has been a loss of coördination with God at a certain point in the race development, that is entirely consistent with evolution. It is a possibility, peculiarly inherent in man's organization. Man the embryo is, like his divine parent, creative. He can not only to a considerable degree choose between environments, but he can change his environment; he can destroy the effects of its divine transmissiveness by filling it with his own creations; he can put out his own spiritual eye by devoting his sensibilities to the sensual aspects of matter; he can pervert the organism of sonship within himself by devoting it to his own aggrandizement. Thus, while he continues to have many of the faculties that belong to the Divine nature, he can wholly destroy his power to hold reciprocity with God. He may go on and develop

certain spiritual faculties, but he cannot develop in the divine character; his evolution will cease to be that of a divine logos, or organ of the spiritual world. He will become instead an organ of the perishable cosmos, turning that cosmos from a revelatory environment, a creation of God, a paradise of divine communings, into his own creation, a seductive realm, that appeals on every side to selfishness, that holds out on every tree of its garden the fruits of lust and greed and egotism. Having formed about himself such an environment, the development of the man within it will be forward as regards intellect, will-power, passion, and artistic creation; forward, too, as regards law, social structure, and a certain kind of self-righteous moral nature; but downward as regards correspondence to God; — downward out of that love of God which is his eternal element into self-interest, which should be his transitory element; downward from the transcendent life which is his heaven to the immanent life which is sure to become his hell: for that immanent life, that psychic, organic force with its vast

affinities, its hungerings and thirstings, its exquisite sensitiveness, its burning passions, is a bottomless abyss for the spirit seeking after self-gratification, — an abyss full of flames and self-torture, of self-created fiends also. Nor is this Gehenna a solitary cell. No spirit falls alone,— he carries others with him, whose sufferings add to his own remorse and misery. He finds himself preyed upon as well as preying. The serpent's fang that he has formed in his own nature he soon discovers in his fallen comrades.

Such a fall of man is not only possible consistently with evolution, but it is unmistakably a fact of history. Not without great struggle does either a nation or a man avoid this abyss. Neither is there anything inconsistent with evolution in St. Paul's idea that "in Adam all died." It is simply an emphasis of the truth of the solidarity of the race, and of the fact that wherever there is a failure of spiritual life it is due, largely, to the failure of a grand moral organism, or stem of humanity. Caligula at first held out moral hopes for Rome. There was a potency in him for

the Empire. But when the son of Germanicus fell into the abyss of sensuality, Rome fell with him. The term "Adam" simply stands for the first man who had heavenly communings, in whom there was developed the pyschic organism for divine reciprocity. His failure to follow the law of that organism, and thus to develop into a spiritual leader, meant not only the blight of his own life, but the loss of him as a great organ of moral victory, a stem of righteousness and supernaturalism for the race. The first great organ of revelation took the downward path. The second Adam, that is, the second man capable of becoming a universal revelation, took the upward path,— he followed the law of revelation; he triumphed over the passional immanent life, and sacrificed it to spiritual ends. He carried up into the spiritual organism, for its use, his whole vitality. There was an absolute conservation and subjection of force to the supernatural. As a natural result, he conquered death, and attained to the resurrection body. There was nothing arbitrary about this,— nothing anti-natural, or contrary to natural

law. If it seems a miracle, it is simply because it transcends our acquaintance with natural organisms. "As in Adam all died, so in Christ shall all be made alive," says the apostle. It is not necessary to conceive of Adam as a progenitor of the whole race; the idea of sinning in Adam does not imply this necessarily, any more than the idea of our living in Christ makes us out the natural progeny of Christ. All that the expression "in" signifies is cöordination. The race is a solidarity. Spiritual biogenesis, and indeed intellectual biogenesis, are just as organic as the sexual. Washington was in truth the father of his country. In a civic sense he begat us. Had he failed, we should all have failed in him, and should have lived under a system of failure and civic death till God raised up for us some organ great enough to lift us into free institutions. The great man of the race is the type and intellectual begetter of smaller men. So, also, in the expression, "in Adam all died," we have simply an emphasis of the eternal coördination between the natural and moral worlds; the two are inseparable.

Throughout the Hebrew revelation, sin is conceived of, not merely as a moral act, but as a vast degenerate development; a wrong act results in the failure of a moral organism. As a result, the whole environment — nay, the whole system of organisms and divine government — is necessarily deformed for a time. This constitutes a natural history of sin. God gives a man a beneficent organism, full of divine potencies, whose fruition depends on a certain law of evolution. The man violates that law, turns the organism to his own sensual uses, makes it an instrument of the psychic, rather than the eternal life. Naturally, the organism evolves into a plague, the fire and worm of corruption appear in it. There is a fine instrument, you say, for a loving God in the midst of his universe holding reciprocity with all its forces, breeding spiritual death everywhere. Yet the loving God DOES use it, takes it up into those large coördinations that we call his Providence, and turns it from a selfish individualistic plague into that awful yet holy and delivering thing, a divine punishment. Thus sin becomes a kind of nat-

ural order, a progressive system of divine government, a purgatorium, out of which a man shall not come, perchance, till he has paid his uttermost farthing, — in other words, tasted enough of his plague to make him sick of it; nay, more, to make of him a lesson in the world's education, a personal object-lesson sent by God to humanity. Happy is the man who can early accept this lesson, for God's punishments have three stages, — the reformatory, in which a man is made to taste his plague that he may be sick of it, for when sin tastes bad in the mouth virtue comes to light; secondly, the educational stage, in which the man is made an object-lesson, it being the only thing that God for the time can do with him; and, thirdly, the stage of perdition, in which he, having ceased to be a possible organ of divine humanity, can only be separated like a rotten member, and given over to the destructive power which he himself has unloosed. There is in the Scriptural conception of God's punishment nothing arbitrary or non-natural; it is simply the natural system of sin, whose development the apostle

struggled to express as follows: Lust, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin, and sin when full-grown bringeth forth death. God's government simply consists in taking up into its divine coördinations whatever organism there is, and using it, as the invested property of the race, for that race's eternal benefit.

Thus the natural system of sin becomes under God's hand a matrix of life for the perishing conscience; but wherever there is such a natural system of sin, such as plainly exists in this world, the only escape from it, from its retroactive operation and its painful method of preserving the conscience, is through redemption, that is, through an organism sufficiently great and vital, and reciprocal with the cosmos, to overcome its evil with good. It is not worth while to dispute about terms. We may call such action vicarious, or drop the term if we like it; it is, of course, true in a sense. Whenever one organ of a body is made to do the work of other injured, diseased or abortive organs, in such a way as to carry off the effects of broken law, that action is in a sense vicarious.

And, in a certain sense, the work of every organ is vicarious. The work of the stem for the bough is vicarious; so is the work of the roots. The death of the seed in the ground is vicarious. But, as has been said, the word applies more particularly to that action of an organ which is redemptive in the sense of overcoming an abnormal state of things brought about by dependent organs. Every organ is, however, mediatorial in its work, and particularly is it true of all great central organs. They are mediators of life in the grandest sense, and when they are called upon to overcome disease, or abnormality in any form, they are redeemers. The truth that they are redeemers is not antagonistic to evolution; nor does it show that evolution has ceased to go forward: it only implies that the evolution has been abnormal, that it has not been in the direction of the native element of the organism or its noblest correspondences; and the redemption consists in overcoming this abnormal evolution, and in bringing every organ, and particularly the most vital organs, into coordination with their vital element, and

making them the organs of the kingdom to which they supremely belong.

Another condition essential to the spiritual embryo is law. As we study the human child, we note first of all that it is a germinating organic force. As has been previously said, its first necessity is food, or, in other words, such forms of matter as it can readily penetrate and organize. These are at first few. A babe must have milk, and even a full-grown man must have some form of matter that has been previously organized. In short, the word "food" stands for the narrowness of the field of man's organic power. All forms of matter that are covered by the word "food" he can take up and organize psychically, assimilating them to his own organs, and so fashioning them into a little world — a microcosm — in which his soul is immanent, and on every part of which he acts psychically. Outside the microcosm or body he can only act mechanically, that is, through the mechanical leverage of his bones and muscles; yet through this mechanical action he brings about the most wonderful coördinations

of material forces. These coördinations result in new products, some of them mechanical, such as the electric motor; others vital, such as the fruits, flowers, grains, and domestic animals. Most wonderful of all these products, however, is human society, or the civilized world, which includes all the others, and into which the individual man is built and builds himself as an organ of a vast body.

In all this process man is under law. He is compelled to work with God; he can make no coördinations that are not rendered possible by the Divine Logos. In Him, as St. Paul said, all things stand together, or are correlated. In these reciprocities, caused by the Divine Logos, exist all the potencies that are open to man. By these, which disclose themselves to man's advancing intelligence, the mind of the Logos touches and arouses his mind, vitalizing it and awakening it to the significance of nature. Thus God communes with man, — educates and develops him through his environment, which is everywhere penetrated and adapted to certain coördinations. Certain of these coördina-

tions are possible, others impossible. For instance, a man can command bread by cultivating wheat, grinding and baking it. He cannot make bread without heat, nor can he command it from stones. These fixed adaptations, which limit the coördinating power of man, we call the laws of nature. It is evident, however, that they are relative to our powers. Within these limits there is a vast field of liberty. Nay, within them man can, so to speak, make his own world. Nature is to him a God-given property, to have and to hold for his own creative purposes; for it is by work, particularly by creative work, that he grows to be a spirit, an artist, a revelator, a perfected organ of the Logos. Therefore his cosmic environment is so adapted to him by God, as to develop first organic force by means of food, then will-power through the struggle for food, — a struggle sometimes so stern and terrible that many an individual perishes; yet through it there is built up a stronger will-power in the surviving race, and therefore a stronger will-power in the individuals. Then, as will-power is developed, as man becomes

a strong, toiling animal, one stronger will becomes the stem of society; the strong will develops too far, and society is built up into a despotism. Still, through that man-made tyrannous world, God's primal law presses, till men in their desperation for bread and for life become first ingenious, then intellectual, then instinct with high courage, and at last free, each man being no longer a helpless unit, but a living organ of the government, having his vote, his property, and his ability to stamp his own ideals upon a little world of his own, a home, or habitation of his spirit.

Thus, if men make false coördinations, if they produce a malignant or abortive creation, being in God's universe, it works its own cure, becoming God's plague, curse, chastisement, pressing hard on man's great primal organic necessities, and so forcing him at last to fight against his own evil product, and to put it down in God's name, and to put himself under the lead of God's Spirit. But in no case does God's cosmos shut out liberty: on the contrary, by the grim pressure of necessity, by the beckonings and unfoldings of its vast

potencies, by its insistence on action and creative action, it develops liberty, for man is an embryo spirit, and a spirit is a free, organic, creative power; and what is true of man is true of all spirits. All the material facts and forces are correlated with free organic powers. The material forces do not stand alone,— everywhere they depend upon the supernatural. This is a universe of lives, of spirits, of sons of God. God is immanent in it, penetrating it; but, with the exception of those certain fixed adaptations called laws, he does not necessitate it. If he did, it would be no moral universe, for freedom is the very foundation of character, and the spirit is essentially a self-developing power, requiring liberty and property as well as Divine guidance. Here, then, we find the supreme condition of development for the embryo: LIBERTY. God's kingdom, therefore, cannot be compulsory. He does not overawe us by assuming some vast symbol of himself corresponding to the human body, thus bringing to bear upon us the awe of his tremendous aspect, or the terrors of his mechanical force. He seeks to control us

rather by his spirit, through suggestion, for the dependent spirit is his child. Him, therefore, God does not overshadow, nor rule by force, nor chain to himself by psychic magnetism, nor prove the Divine existence to him by some irrefutable argument, thus vanquishing his intellect and holding him a spiritual captive; but dwells within him in his subliminal consciousness, upholding all his vitalities, constantly feeling him, feeling for him, suffering with him, hungering when he hungers, pierced by his calamities, — above all, by his evil use of liberty, — awakening in him the ethical feeling by radiations of his Holy Spirit through progressive environments, often pricking him in the heart by the pressure of a divine sensibility on his conscience, but ever aiming at freedom, ever leading or driving him forward into larger organic force and fuller liberty.

Thus in the human spirit there is always the power to refuse progressive coördination with God; to resist the Holy Ghost; to reject the Christ, the organ of his spiritual kingdom; to put away the divine suggestions, and destroy the image

of God, which his work would naturally produce upon the mind; yes, even to ruin the soul, for, by suffering the life to become absorbed with what Christ calls this present cosmos, the power of spiritual focalization is destroyed. Not only is this true, but the spirit possesses the power to make sensuous coördinations, and so create worlds, environments, cosmic processes, that are opposed to God, that shut out God's light, that quench his Spirit. Thus it is possible for a single soul, if it be great, creative, and magnetic, to darken a large part of this world for other souls, sending forth the miasmatic gloom of its own spirit and filling nature with embodiments of lust or ambition that shut up the windows of heaven and eclipse the Sun of Righteousness, so that the present cosmos becomes, as it were, non-transmissive and devilish.

Such, for the most part, is this present world to-day, though the light of Christ is illuminating it more and more. Still more was it in his day an evil world, a world that "hated both him and his Father." Nor is there anything irrational in his tes-

timony that much of the cosmic darkness and evil was due to the blighting power of evil spirits. It is unphilosophic to say that such spirits have no relation to us. This is a universe of reciprocal forces; its whole movement is toward unity and reciprocity. The goal of the individual spirit is not individualistic but social. Spiritual power is not the power to stand alone, an isolated moral force, but to take one's place as an organ in a vast spiritual body. Spiritual manhood means the comprehension of social law, the practical mastery of one's own sphere of influence, and the power to take and to hold it reciprocally with other spheres of influence.

This is the case with every organic force. It must learn to hold its own in the field of forces to which it belongs. The tree that is to face the north wind must grow in the north wind. Eternal life, like any other kind of life, is a survival; its functions are developed by antagonism. The idea of a heaven where there is nothing to resist is absurd. Peace is the result of conquest over a complex cosmos, whose powerful forces cease to harass us because

we understand them, and have acquired the faculty by which they are to be controlled. An undisciplined heart would make a hell of heaven. It could not maintain its proper sphere of influence, or keep in unity with God. The secret of spiritual power is not so much to gain faculties for one's self as to become a sound organ of the whole. The child who is to become an instrument of deliverance to his country must needs feel his oppressor's tyranny even from the cradle. Man, the immortal, must needs contend with the immortal. It stands together with the development of a supernatural universe that there should be a free interplay of all its forces, personal and impersonal, and that man, a miniature logos and angel of God, should wrestle, not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, with the rulers of the darkness of this cosmos, with spiritual wickedness in high places. *Ex pede Herculem*, says the old proverb. A single organ reveals the structure of the whole giant. Either we ought to give up believing the testimony of Jesus, that man is the son of God, or else accept the kind of universe

that corresponds to such an embryo and its development. A midway course is irrational. If man be a son of God, and Jesus the Christ the Son of man, the final issue of this perishing cosmos and the stem of God's spiritual kingdom, then are we related to all spiritual existences, and our spiritual life must be shaped by a struggle with spiritual influences; then it is true also that the darkness and evil of this cosmos are due, not to its original badness or grossness or opaqueness, for it is actually transmissive and tremulous with divine light, but to the fact of its plasticity under the creative power of free spirits.

The evil world, therefore, — that is, the cosmos in its evil aspect,— is not God's creation, but the creation of evil spirits, both human and superhuman; while, in dealing with this world, God, notwithstanding his immanence and transcendence, being actuated by love and caring for his children, — not for one child alone but for the whole universe of lives, that they may become divine characters, pure and holy spirits, children and heirs of his glory,— God is therefore, I say, shut up to the spiritual process

of suggestion, touching the sensibility of individual souls, and moving upon them gently by the radiation of his own spiritual life. Thus he leads them forward in the pathway of a spiritual obedience; while they themselves, gaining strength by resistance against evil, whether coming from their own passional psychic nature or from external suggestion, overcome evil with good, and create new environments that reveal God's personality; not, however, without great struggle and suffering in which God himself suffers, even as when He who so loved the world gave his only begotten Son. Thus, as St. Paul puts it, the whole creation is made subject to vanity, not because vanity — or, what is the same thing, evil — represents God's will, but because of God's hope that through this cosmic process of liberty the universe of lives shall be delivered from the bondage of passion, not into the iron rule of external authority, but into "the glorious liberty of the sons of God;" for the whole issue of the cosmic process, and its earnest expectation, is "the manifestation of the sons of God."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE FOUNDATION OF BELIEF.

I. *Darwinism and Christianity.*

It may be objected to this Christ universe that it does not conform to the Darwinian conception of evolution, but it must be remembered that the Christ view is taken from an altogether different standpoint. It is a more inclusive view, — a glimpse of things in their final relations. Then it certainly does not antagonize Darwinism; and as to the latter, can any one imagine that it is a final view of the cosmos?

How is it possible that man, whose reason is in process of development, should by it construct a final philosophy? Besides, the Darwinian — or, as it is in its complete form, the Spencerian — theory is founded upon observations into which the element of spiritual perception has not entered at all. It is reasonable to sup-

pose that the perfect spiritual perception of the Christ should see things on a larger scale; but the general harmony is, to say the least, remarkable. Both agree in the conception of an organic evolution taking place under environment, and in both there appears also the idea of a survival of the fittest. The radical difference between the two views is, that the Spencerian does not go to the bottom of things; it leaves us confronted by a vast series of forces which for some reason act uniformly, but the *ground* for uniformity does not appear. It is therefore in reality no philosophy of the cosmos. We are told that things stand together, but we are not told what the mediating element is in which they stand together; we do not see the entire process; we are left confronted by facts that cannot be brought into unity; nor indeed have we any proof of nature's uniformity. We accept it, as Mr. Huxley has admitted, by an act of faith. Evolution is not therefore a completely rational view. At bottom of it we are obliged to accept a premise without proof; we have no certainty as to the ultimate relation of things; indeed, many

evolutionists hold that the final relation of things is fortuitous. This amounts to pretty much the same thing as saying that there is no final relation. This is not a mere theoretical question, it is one of infinite practicality; for this very notion that the forces of the universe do not finally stand together in any intelligent plan, but are drifting toward a future without ultimate coherence, has to many minds taken away all sanction from the moral powers. Moreover, it takes away the validity of the reason itself. If reason and conscience are simply powers that have been developed in a fortuitous struggle for survival, then, as Mr. Balfour intimates, neither of them can be considered an ultimate authority.

True, their authority rests upon the logic of nature, but if nature herself is adrift, this last fact reduces all our thought to stultification. But at this point Christ comes to the rescue of the evolutionary view. His spiritual perception supplies the missing element; it makes nature rational and spiritual. If all things do indeed stand together in one personal life which is both spirit and psyche, then the logic of nature

becomes the logic of God; and, however imperfect reason or conscience may be in their present stage, or when detached from God's guidance, they have infinite worth and sanction as the organs of his natural revelation. Standing in relation to him, they become sources of divine illumination. Nature thus becomes God's voice, saying, in the words of the old Hebrew prophet, "I will guide thee with mine eye."

II. *Authority and Reason.*

The foregoing chapters seem to me a fair rendering of Christ's view into the thought of our own times. If this is correct, then two points of frequent debate are settled: First, as to the foundation of belief. Only one conception is possible if we accept this idea of the supernatural, — belief must be founded on perception. If the supernatural is, as Christ taught, the natural environment of the human soul; if man has in him a potentiality for feeling God; if man be the embryo supernatural and God the parental, — then faith in God must correspond to the faith of a child in his parent, and that is certainly founded

on perception. As the perception broadens, the child's faith becomes rational; as it extends upward, the faith becomes moral and spiritual. It is true that the parental teachings are beyond the perception of the child, but the child accepts them because he perceives the parental character. Conscience shows him the quality of the parental life; reason shows him the relation between the parental acts. Thus he perceives his father's life as a whole, and he perceives that it is not unitable with unkindness or deceit.

So, while he accepts the parental teachings on trust, his trust is entirely rational. It is founded on a perfectly coherent perception; nor does the world afford us any more solid basis for knowledge than this. If revelation be what Jesus called it, light; if the disciple be, as Jesus declared, a man who walks in the light; if the truth of God be, as such language implies, the transmission of God's thought and feeling, the actual coördination of God's life with ours, — then assuredly it is a misnomer to call anything a revelation of God unless it does actually awaken percep-

tion. Revelation, on the divine side, is transmission; on the human side, sight. We are told by certain wiseacres that there are just two foundations for faith: one is reason, the other authority; and if a man puts his faith in authority, he must be consistent and give up reason. Such talk leads to confusion. A medical expert is an authority. When an invalid puts his case in the hands of a medical expert, does he throw away reason? Not unless he is an uncommonly stupid man. If he has any rational perception, he uses it to find out just how valuable an authority that physician is. He does not reason about the treatment. That he takes on faith; it is beyond his reasoning faculties, because it is beyond his experience. Authority settles the medical questions, but the authority itself he does not accept save on the basis of a thoroughly rational perception. The same is true in regard to a witness in a judicial trial. The testimony of a witness is accepted with regard to what he has seen, for the facts of his testimony are beyond the observation of the court, but it is not accepted unless he

is a credible witness, and a credible witness is one in whom we perceive honesty and intelligence. Thus, while we accept his authority on faith, we found that faith itself on our own rational perception of his qualities, and in this process the whole perceptive organism is essential. Reason and feeling are coördinated.

Nothing could be more absurd therefore than the general statement, that, in accepting authority, we must renounce reason. I am aware that this claim is made by certain so-called ecclesiastical authorities, and that drives us to the question, What is an authority? A genuine authority is a personality who transcends our own faculties in some direction, so that we are compelled to supplement our knowledge by his. The ultimate basis of authority is the fact already referred to, that nature's method is organic: she creates no separate units; all things are interdependent. Evolution brings about constant specialization; each individual is stocked with his peculiar set of capacities and adaptations for the common good. This specialization leads to arrangement in groups and about organic centres.

It is with men as with plants or with the human body: some are stems, others branches; some are heads, others members. There are also parents and children, leaders and followers. Each man is an organ; each organ has its function; each function has its authority based on social necessity. The organ exists, not for itself, but in order to promote the highest development of the whole. When one organ interferes with the development of another, that is tyranny. Every organ has the authority to resist tyranny. Liberty is the right to perform one's organic function. Every organ is bound to justify itself by promoting the development of its dependent organs. Authority is, therefore, the right of an organ to perform its function in supplementing the lives that are dependent on it. There is an element of coercion in all authority, for the structure of things makes its function a necessity. An authority may not be able to assert its own right, but nature will assert it. The Athenians may banish Aristides, but they will have to take their punishment. The Jews may reject their Messiah; but if he

be truly the natural head of the organism, then the natural law of the structure will bring in a judgment day. We all have to settle our accounts with authority; still a person who is a natural leader may base his authority on various footings, according to his choice. Cæsar based his upon force; that was autocracy. It was necessary at the time, because the other organs of the Roman state were unfit to perform their function. The same was true under the Mosaic theocracy: autocratic or aristocratic authority was a necessity, because the subjects of the authority had not yet reached the possibilities of self-government. Self-government begins with the power to perceive a true authority, and to choose a true leader in rational faith. As soon as that becomes possible, authority must base itself upon perception; nay, it must anticipate that crisis by attempting to form perception. When an authority bases itself upon rational perception, then it is rational authority. When it bases its claim to faith not only upon rational perception, but on the development and purification of the sensibility, then it is spiritual authority.

The characteristic of rational authority is, that although it is conscious of natural headship, it does not put its claim before men at the point of the bayonet, but endeavors to gain its position by developing rational perception.

The characteristic of spiritual authority is, that, while it rejects force and appeals to reason, it also depends on purifying and spiritualizing the life. Now, there is no question as to the position which Jesus took in regard to his authority. It is clear that he believed himself to be the supreme authority, the Messiah, the Son of God, for he declared so on oath. His relation to revelation in general has been already defined. He was the fulfiller, the crowning organ for interpretation, transmission, and formation of spiritual life. It was his function not only to radiate God, but so to form and purify and develop the life of man that it should be perceptive. "I am come," said he, "that the blind may receive sight." His entire attitude was consistent with this position. He spoke with supreme authority to those who followed him, but he rejected physical force. He

pointed out by parables the organic necessity of his authority. He showed its *raison d'être* in the nature of things; nay, he pointed back of the nature of things to the will of God. He showed how "the powers that be are ordained of God." He pointed out the coercive element in his own authority, — the certainty that those that rejected him must reckon with nature and with God. He declared that it would be "more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment" than for those that neglected his gospel. But all this was background; the foreground of his claim upon men's faith, the gospel itself, was his radiation of the divine character. This was the formative light: "the lame walked, the lepers were cleansed, to the poor the gospel was preached," — these were his credentials. See Luke vii. 22. Note also that the psychic element plays an important part in this evidential work of Jesus. The cures would have been impossible save for it. It is an eternal element of the divine light. But the passage universally accepted as a statement both of Christ's authority and the foundation of faith is Matt. xvi. 18.

Strangely enough, this very passage has been twisted wholly away from its historic significance and construed into a bestowal of arbitrary and dogmatic authority upon a bishop. The fact of the case was, that Jesus had actually refrained from stating, even to the twelve, that he was the Christ, or the Son of God. Until they had been following him a very considerable length of time, the statement would have been to them purely dogmatic, and, therefore, valueless; so he waited for their perception to develop. Then, in the quiet at Cesarea Philippi, having drawn out from them the varying drift of public opinion concerning himself, he suddenly threw the whole vexed question of his authority upon their reason: "But whom say ye that I am?" When Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," he replied, "Happy art thou, Simon; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven." In other words, the human organ of revelation, the flesh and blood of Jesus, had accomplished its divine function for Simon. It had not

spoken of itself. It had been a faithful transmitting agent; the Father had spoken through it. And the corresponding fact was also true. The rational and spiritual perception of Simon had begun to form. It had penetrated beyond the human agency to the invisible facts and relationships that lay behind it; the soul of Simon was resting upon ultimate verities. "And I tell thee," said Jesus, "thou art a rock, and upon this ledge I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Then it was that to Simon and to the twelve Jesus committed, not an authority differing from his own, but a dependent extension of the same organic function, declaring that to them, as exercising that function, he would give the keys of the kingdom of heaven, the very keys of revelation and perception by which he had already unlocked the kingdom for them. Unfortunately the ecclesiastics have, to a large extent, misunderstood the nature of this authority, and have gone about endeavoring to make proselytes to a dogma, giving promise of heaven to all who re-

ceived it and of hell to those who refused. Nothing could be more foreign to the idea or spirit of Christ. Nor could there be any greater wickedness than has been manifested in the name of Christ's authority by men who believed the teachings of Christ as mere dogmas, without a particle of insight into their spiritual meaning. Such men are not coördinated with God. They have not the righteousness of Christ nor do they belong to his church, if his idea of the church is to be accepted. The church, according to Christ, is an extension of the revelatory organism; the true disciple is an organ of revelation, acting under Christ. His authority over men is simply an extension, according to his measure, of Christ's authority. He should, like Christ, bear witness to the revelation that he has perceived, but he has no right to bind dogma upon men in advance of their spiritual perception.

The first business of the church is to follow her Master, in forming a matrix of spiritual life, where perception may be formed and developed under liberty. A church is a home for God's children. Its

method of spiritualization must be that of the home. Its authorities must be of the most revelatory and parental type. If they cannot form spiritual perception, they are worthless. There cannot be a doubt on this point, for it is corroborated by Christ's own expression, "Except ye become as little children ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven." It is true the little child can be made to submit to the harshest kind of parental dogmatism, but the child that does so submit is a case of cruel malformation in which the natural tendency of childhood has been brutally extinguished, and it is an insult to call such stupid cruelty parental authority. The mind of a little child has naturally an inquiring tendency, and the peculiar characteristic of every embryo life is a tender sensitiveness to the radiation of the parental life. The child nestles to the parental bosom; it feels after the fatherhood and motherhood. The child soul is full of sensibility and of a desire to understand; the eye is clear, but unformed; the soul has not yet been centred on a selfish passion, nor the reason taught to play tricks for its satisfaction.

Now the normal coördination of parent with child depends on the proper development of that perceptive organism: this is the parent's hope; it is for this his authority exists; this is the potency of faith; and when the faith of childhood is thus based on the normal development of the child's perception, without undue restraint of either feeling or inquiry, then that faith rests upon a rock,— it strikes deep into unchanging realities; it rests on eternal values. Nothing less than such a faith can satisfy God, but the method for developing it involves much sacrifice. This Christ clearly understood.

It often happens that, as the child grows, the development of physical energy and the stimuli of external pleasure waken in him a far greater consciousness of his own vitalities than of the parental love. The boy's eye begins to be evil, for it is turned upon himself. There is too much ego in his cosmos; his reason, too, plays him a trick. Perfectly clear within its narrow range, it seems to him adequate to any task; whatever cannot satisfy it he scornfully rejects. He is, at that age, off the

track of normal development, and in danger of becoming morally detached from the home which is the matrix of ethical life for him. He is neither child nor man, but a kind of priggish animal. If he continues to develop on that line he will soon become a disorganized boy and a possible criminal.

When a lad gets into that state, neither arguments nor explanations can do him much good. He can overmatch you with arguments which you find it impossible to answer, simply because you cannot show him the larger aspect of things. Proof lies in broader reasoning, but broader reasoning requires broader perception, and broader perception requires a larger and more complex sensibility. For the attainment of this larger sensibility there is but one method, that of revelation. But to this he has become insensitive; therefore he must, as we say, have his heart touched. The parental spirit must in some way manage to make itself felt. This is the problem of parental government; often it is only through a tragedy that the parental spirit succeeds in making itself felt, and so restores the intellectual little brute to the

path of normal evolution. Then, for the first time, the potential spiritual sensibility of the youth is awakened. He experiences genuine reverence, namely, the consciousness of what is really great in the parental authority, for it is the spiritual love that is the true majesty. Then, too, comes that new sense of obligation — the consciousness of the boy that he belongs to the larger life, not merely because of external authority, but because of the unity between that life and his own. He belongs to his father, because no one loves him like his father. Even his own self-love is a poor and feeble thing compared with the father's spiritual affection for him. With this new consciousness of the fatherhood, there comes a new and tender sense of sin as an injury done against love, while, at the same time, with the sense of sin comes the assurance of a flood-tide of forgiveness. Thus there is born in him a new spiritual conscience.

These are, I believe, always the elements of character developed in the lad when he is profoundly touched by parental sacrifice, and with these begin the purification and development of perception. Now, to the

mind of Christ, the position of man with reference to God was like that of the child who has passed through the infantile stage of childhood and has reached that of youth. He is a child still, but it is the crisis of childhood. Kindergarten pedagogy, rewards and penalties, the authority of force and dogma, all the old theocratic methods, had done their work and must be laid aside; a new authority must take their place, — a larger, tenderer, more personal revelation. The heart must be touched by the divine tragedy. No explanation, nor philosophy, nor proof, could meet the case. The Christ was the person who represented God's spiritual authority, but that authority was organic, not arbitrary. It must, therefore, now manifest itself by disclosing its vital force in the heart of God; man must see that he belonged to God, because God loved him even unto death. There was something awful in the fixed determination of Jesus that the cross should be his only answer to those who challenged him. This thought of Jesus was clearly grasped by St. Paul, who declared that his preaching did not consist in phi-

losophy or rhetoric, lest he should make the cross of Christ of none effect. In other words, he did not dare to come, with his human explanations or fine speeches, between the dying Redeemer and the hearts of men. There are some facts that can best speak for themselves. The simplest telling of the story is the best. What is desired in the witness is, that he should himself be profoundly in touch with the fact. That makes him transmissive. Skeptics have complained that preachers were emotional, and that emotion was opposed to clear perception. That depends on the kind of perception required.

When there is already sufficient reasoning power, and the main thing demanded is a larger and purer sensibility, then it is impossible to get along without emotion, but it must be of the highest and purest kind. The human flesh and blood must become, as in Christ's case, a self-abnegating medium for the Divine love.

III. *The Authority of the New Testament.*

Christ's view is evidently the one taken by the evangelists. His basis of authority

is that on which the New Testament claims our belief. What is true of Christ's authority must be true concerning the authority of the New Testament. By its own assertion it is a history of facts that are coördinate with us; it is a revelation or nothing, and it is a revelation of our own spiritual environment. True, it is about a historic Jesus, but it tells us that Jesus is the Son of God, that he is the conditioned divine personality, that he has ascended into God's omnipresence. He must therefore be near, as God is near, "closer than breathing, nearer than hands and feet." "I am with you always," he said; "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew xviii. 20.) The New Testament does not state facts dogmatically; it is a book surcharged with life, tremulous with divine love. It is a portrait rather than an historic account, — a portrait through which the living Christ breathes and looks upon the soul of man. The thoughts and feelings of Christ radiate from every page; they invite the soul to follow. Following, one finds both the heart

and mind of Christ; the supernatural environment is disclosed to him. The authority of the New Testament is therefore that of an organ. It justifies itself to an ever-widening perception. I do not mean for a moment that there is a lack of external evidence; but it would take a separate book to speak of that. My subject is the relation of *Christ's idea* to evidence. If Christ's idea be correct, and the New Testament be a divine revelation, then the principal evidence *must* be internal. It consists in a spiritual perception grasping the eternal realities themselves. What other criterion could there be for a revelation? Could a chain of external evidence take the place of this? Could historic testimony constitute the ultimate guarantee of a revelatory organ? Could anything do this but the development in us of God-consciousness? Doubtless, on the basis of Christ's view, the best *external* evidence for the New Testament is the historic part which it has played in the spiritual development of the race. The great fact of human history is the struggle for spiritual survival, flesh against spirit.

You see it everywhere, in the old Accadian hymns, in the Vedas, in the Egyptian Book of the Dead. Now, in this struggle the New Testament has, despite the bloodiest opposition, come to the front; it has taken the lead. For it has fortified the spiritual life, satisfied its hungerings, relieved its guilt, harmonized it with its ideals, adjusted it to its supernatural environment, supplied it with the greatest of all moral and spiritual forces in the love of God, developed its valuation of the human soul. It has called the individual to the most sublime sacrifices, yet has harmonized the sacrifice of the individual life with its eternal welfare. It has reconciled self-abnegation and self-interest, and so taught men the only reasonable altruism. It has developed the perception of those who have identified themselves with it, till they have had not only the idea of God, but a perfectly rational consciousness of his presence. To call the belief of these men irrational is absurd. It is backed up by the logic of life. The necessities of the spiritual struggle are part of our evolution; the authority of the New Testament

is therefore based upon the law of evolution itself. The disciples of Jesus may well say, with Peter when asked if he would forsake Christ, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Eternal life is spiritual life, the final stage of man's evolution. It stands in a logical unity with the previous stages. The man who has attained to it discerns his own life as a rational continuity. He also discerns it as standing together with the facts of the universe. As the Duke of Argyle has asserted, the spiritual life of the Christian is the real unit and core of all social evolution, for social evolution demands a vital altruism. It is impossible for altruism to continue as a persistent force in social evolution unless it is thoroughly vital, and a spirit from which reason, hope, and individual satisfaction have departed is not vital. Altruism is essentially spiritual in its nature; it needs to be fed upon eternal realities, like the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and a joyful immortality. It draws its vitality from the words of eternal life, for the

words are transmissive. They are not dogmas, but vehicles of immortality. The struggle for spiritual survival is therefore the spinal cord of social evolution. The victory of Christian faith is the hope of the world. This fact the intelligent Christian sees. His faith in the New Testament is therefore based on an exceedingly broad and coherent perception, embracing both internal and external evidence. For this relation of the New Testament to spiritual and social evolution *is* a colossal external evidence, compared with which the external evidences commonly adduced are insignificant. Therefore there can be no greater misrepresentation than the oft-repeated statement that the Christian faith is supra-rational. Such a notion is radically false and confusing. It is true that the Christian refuses to base his belief on reason and external sensation alone; he has rational ground for such a refusal. Reason and external sensation do not constitute the whole of the perceptive organism, and the Christian is perfectly logical in demanding that perception shall take in all the elements of vision; that it shall in-

clude the highest feelings; that it shall be pure and rational and spiritual. He is also logical in insisting with Christ that a man shall become as a little child.[1] If the perceptive organism includes the whole life, then surely nothing but the turning of the whole life, with all its sensitive elements, toward the organ of revelation, can possibly fit a man to judge of that revelation: he must be touched by the larger life before he can be fitted to reason about it. It is not the use of reason that the Christian objects to: it is the divorce of reason from the rest of the perceptive organism, and the exaltation of it with external sensation, as though the two together constituted a complete criterion. Above all does he object to the absurd claim that belief can be founded on logic. The Christian knows that logic is a machine exceedingly liable to tricks and accident. One of its premises, at least, must rest upon what is called a known fact; but the known fact always contains an unknown element, which if expanded might make a

1 "Except ye be converted," means simply, "Except ye turn."

new universe and break up the whole syllogism. Therefore he does not think that our faith in any objective reality can rest upon logic. Indeed, the thoughtful Christian is inclined to ask whether this is not the real difficulty with the naturalistic position as exposed by Mr. Balfour. Nothing could be more suggestive of this than Mr. Spenser's reply: he complains that Mr. Balfour has not fairly represented naturalism. Probably he is correct. The average reader of Mr. Balfour's book will most likely feel that the argument proves too much, but this is exactly what the common mind also feels about naturalism itself. Any logic that ends, as Mr. Spenser confesses his does, in a dark outlook, certainly does, to the healthy human intellect, prove too much. Besides, it must be remembered that the shaky position in which Mr. Balfour leaves naturalism is the result of pushing to its legitimate consequences the chosen position of Mr. Huxley and Mr. Spenser. They have been always asserting that their position rested upon strict logic.

Mr. Huxley's latest book was an insist-

ence that Christianity should justify itself by strict logic, precisely as the naturalistic philosophers justify their view. Now, the curious fact is, that, while the naturalistic philosophy does, on the whole, commend itself to the coherent perception of mankind, yet the moment it is subjected to a strict and universal test of logic it begins to look dubious. Furthermore, as has been said, Mr. Huxley himself confesses that the scientist is obliged to accept his fundamental postulate, the uniformity of nature, by an act of faith (which is certainly true, unless his perception can penetrate to an ultimate cause of uniformity); while his logic regarding the primary qualities of matter compels him to depend absolutely on faith for his certitude in regard to the external world. It would appear, therefore, that Mr. Balfour has fairly made his principal point, which is, that those who cannot stand the strict application of logic to their own poition cannot with a very good grace insist on such a process for others. It is true, there is sound sense in Mr. Spenser's objection that Mr. Balfour's book undermines reason, and that to do that

is to commit mental suicide. But this is rather a droll objection for Mr. Spenser to urge, since it is the pushing of his own logical position that actually does the undermining. Does the difficulty, then, really lie in that logical position? This is undeniably the question to which the plain, common-sense thinker is driven. The naturalistic philosophers have done a great and excellent work. It seems certain that the intelligence of mankind will bear out that statement. They have done an immense deal to develop the human reason: why, then, should their system, which has done so much to develop reason, appear to undermine its force? To the common mind, such a fact irresistibly suggests the idea that they have not clearly analyzed their own processes, and that, in representing their system as being based on absolute logic, they have put it in a false and damaging light. It also suggests the question whether their whole system does not in reality rest, like any other objective knowledge, on perception; and whether its actual merit does not lie in the strictness with which they have insisted on the cohe-

rence of perception. It further suggests the query whether proof of an objective fact can ever be anything more than the strict coördination of reason with a wider application of the sensibility; or, in other words, the extension of the coherence of perception. It seems to indicate that perception is proved, or, in other words, corroborated, first, by making sure of the perceptive organism itself, by determining experimentally that it is complete in its elements, that impurities are eliminated, and accurate focalization secured; then, secondly, by exercising it from different points of view. Thus, as, from different view-points, things are seen to stand together in a rational unity, the vision is proved to our reasonable satisfaction. Its coherence with nature is established; we discern a principle of unity, or, in other words, what we call a unifying force. On this ground of coherent perception, taken from different standpoints, we accept the uniformity of nature; we cannot prove it, but a widely coherent perception irresistibly suggests it.

I put this simply as an hypothesis sug-

gested by the exigencies of the case. If it be correct, it certainly throws light upon the situation, for, taking this view, the work which the naturalistic philosophers have accomplished for us cannot be shaken. True, they have not given us a final philosophy of things, — who could expect it of them? — but they have greatly developed and disciplined the perceptive organism, so that its visions have become rational observations. Thus we see, or, what is the same thing, we feel the universe to-day in a larger, truer, and more coherent unity. We see things standing together in wider relations, and it is the verdict of our coherent perceptive organism which gives to naturalism its actual strength. We believe it to be true because it looks coherent to us, because we are finely sensitive to new aspects of things, and discern relations before hidden from the unobserving human eye. But, however broad may be the unity in which we see things, it cannot be perfect; we can never see all around. As Mr. Balfour has pointed out, there are many striking facts that cannot as yet be brought into this scientific unity. Such must always be

the case. To see all around would be to see every aspect of everything, and that, to a finite mind, is impossible. Human perception must be content with imperfect unities; it must get along without absolute coherence. It must supplement itself with God's guidance. Nor does the value of philosophy lie in what it proves, but in its contribution to a more coherent perception. Despite our best philosophizing, there will frequently be two unities, — a spiritual and a material, for instance; we cannot reduce them to one. We need not worry; it is perfectly rational to hold both, while we wait for more light. Sometimes we can reduce things mainly to a single unity, but there will still remain outstanding facts. Such outstanding facts, however, are not to be regarded as disproving a widely coherent vision. If the perceptive organism works coherently, we may logically follow it. Particularly is this the case if our reason coheres with the logic of life: therefore no position can be more rational than that of the believer in the New Testament. Coherent perception growing, day by day, broader, reveals

to him the fact that the New Testament is an organ of spiritual vitality corresponding to the Jesus whom it portrays. It is moreover a spiritual authority. Behind it is the coercion of spiritual necessity, and standing together with it the fact of spiritual evolution. The more he uses his spiritual perception the wider becomes the unity, the fewer become the outstanding facts. Thus the New Testament authority is backed by the logic of life. He is therefore strictly rational when he insists on adhering to it despite the outstanding facts. Particularly is he reasonable in insisting that the New Testament is not to be brought before the bar of those facts and compelled to adjust itself to them; reason would require that the outstanding facts should adjust themselves to the larger and more vital unity. We do not suddenly take the father of a family, who has been a good citizen for forty years, and demand that he shall prove himself innocent of a criminal charge or be condemned. That is opposed to the logic of life. We insist that the burden of proof shall lie with the accusers. The New

Testament has been for eighteen centuries a parent life, — a begetter and feeder of spiritual vitalities. It has supported millions of souls in the struggle for spiritual existence. Millions are still clinging to it for what spiritual life they have. Its authority is the only guide for its children, in matters that transcend their experience. It is not just nor reasonable to demand that it shall now instantly prove its coherence with all outstanding facts or be discredited. As has been already said, no system could stand that test. Naturalism appears ridiculous under it. The burden of proof lies with the critics. They must first prove conclusively their outstanding facts, but this is not enough. The believer in the New Testament is not logically bound to reduce everything to unity with his view. No reasonable man undertakes such a task. The critic must show, not only that his adverse facts are really outstanding, but that they interfere with the coherence of the believer's view in such a way as to discredit his perceptive organism. This same principle applies to the higher criticism. It shows what should be

our attitude toward it. We ought to welcome it, but not because it can absolutely prove anything, or furnish us with any final certitude as regards the New Testament. No one who has followed the process of the Tübingen school can have failed to note the precariousness of its evidence as a foundation for absolute faith.

The final guaranty of a revelation must be spiritual perception; the advantage of the higher criticism lies not in what it is going to prove, but in the element of discipline to our perception. This is so great an advantage that we ought heartily to welcome it, while, at the same time, we resist the unreasonable assertions of some of its followers. Its function is really much more limited than they suppose, and reason requires that it should have a broader working hypothesis which will include the spiritual facts already referred to.

But, it may be urged, all things should be open to reason; we should allow the Bible to be criticised, like any other book, or it is not open to reason. Certainly, but how would you criticise any other book? Would you not require as a condition that

the critic should possess the elements of perception necessary to detect the qualities contained in the book? Is it not reasonable to insist that a man who discusses an authority should know the practical history and relations of that authority?

Shall the genuineness of a Scripture be judged by a man who has neither the insight or spiritual experience to judge what it actually is, what it has done or is doing for human souls, even though he be as lofty an intelligence as Martineau? Shall we not demand of him that he possess sufficient sympathy with psychic humanity to understand practically the pedagogics of the Hebrew system? Reason without adequate feeling or experience is a crippled organ. The critical faculty demands as one of its elements the broadest and highest sensibility. But, it may be urged, if you base the Christian faith on perception, you are on the same footing with such visionaries as the Christian scientists. I answer, we do not base Christianity on a supra-sensuous intuition. We maintain its foundation to be the complete purified and spiritualized organ of perception in

which all the elements of vision are co-ordinated. If we insist on a supra-sensuous element, we insist that it should be a genuine evolution: we insist, also, that it should not be isolated; that it should be compelled to justify itself by its coherence with all the elements that can enter into the process of vision. When the Christian scientist gives us a vision that stands together in perfect harmony with a vast spiritual organism as perfect as our specific revelation, we shall be ready to accept it. When a Roman Catholic miracle turns out to be no sporadic case of religious hypnotism, but a true symbol and prophecy of spiritual experience standing together with such a drama as that of the Hebrew nation and the Christ, we shall be prepared to accept it as an authority; and if it justifies itself by bringing us into a coherent perception of the divine relationship, and thus coördinates our souls with the Divine Spirit, we shall be sure that our faith is founded upon a rock. The ultimate rational verity is the final guaranty of faith, and he who possesses that ultimate verity with any permanent grasp will dis-

cover that it is something beside a fleeting emotion. It is not only love, but reason; it is a coherent thought which pervades the whole New Testament.

Nay, it is an Intellect, of which the broadest human mind is but a shadow, an Intellect ageless and infinite. It is the mind of Christ, and it stands together with the love of Christ in an indivisible unity. For him who finds it, it is indeed "The Rock of Ages."

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Denison, John Henry, 1841-1924.
Christ s idea of the supernatural /

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D44

Denison, John Henry, 1841–1924.
Christ's idea of the supernatural, by John H. Denison. Boston and New York. Houghton, Mifflin and company, 1895.

1 p. l., 423 p. 20cm.

1. Jesus Christ. I. Title.

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